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WELL - WISHER

After her article on the lakshana aspects of Mohanam in one of the earlier issues of Shanmukha, Dr. S. Lalitha now presents an article focusing on the graha swara of Anandabhairavi - the note on which an Anandabhairavi melody can start. What? Are there rules in classical music for everything? Can a kriti in Anandabhairavi or a varnam or an alapana not start on any swara of its arohanam and avarohanam? Well, no, and for good reasons; following the rules is good well, most of the time anyway! In this case, following the graha swaras rule helps in establishing the identity of the raga. Once ragas are presented with their identities clearly stamped, what more pleasure can be derived by a listener? The answer to that one is to combine all these ragas together in a medley called ragamalika! Susha Chandran writes about the Ragamalikas of the Dikshitar family; interestingly, ragamalikas seem to be Muthuswamy Dikshitar's exclusive preserve among the other members of the Carnatic Music Trinity. Establishing identity of a raga is a key aspect of the Aesthetic Values In Sabhagana, as analyzed by Jyotsna Sivakumar. Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan examines another aspect of the same, the importance of sahitya, in her essay Murder on the Musical Stage. Dr. Sulochana Rajendran's past articles on a doyen of Bharatanatyam, Vazhuvoor Ramiah Pillai, provide fodder for the dance article of this quarter, The Natyacharya of Vazhuvoor. Dr. S.A. Veerapandian examines a latest development in the field of music, MIT or Music Information Technology. A. Seshan reports on a dance conference conducted by NCPA, Mumbai in August. P.P. Ramachandran reviews a book on guru Pallavur Mani Iyer written by his disciple Shri Vamanan that was released last year. Jyothi Mohan and Nalini Dinesh report on the last quarter's happenings at the Sabha and the Vidyalyaya.

Anandabhairavi with Focus on its Graha Swara

by Dr. S. Lalitha

The raga

Anandabhairavi is an ancient raga and a very celebrated one in classical, semi-classical and folk music as well. The raga is quite popular in folk melodies, marriage songs and lullabies. The raga is classified as a janya of 20th mela.

Arohanam - srgmpdps
Avarohanam - sndpmgrs

It is a bhashanga raga with anya swara both in arohana / avarohana. Svakiya dhaivatham does not sound in arohanam/avarohanam.

The raga with the exception of shuddha rishabham and prati madhyamam, takes all the other swaras in the scale.

Jaru gamakas (glides) add splendour to the raga.

Sancharas below mandra nishada are not prevalent in the raga.

This is a rakti raga not merely sung with its swaras, but demands expertise and skill on the part of the performer.

The objective

This article focuses on the aspect of graha swara of Anandabhairavi - the swara on which a melody (composition and raga alapana, in particular) in Anandabhairavi commences.

Kritis of the Trinity in the raga are primarily taken for the purpose since their kritis serve as inputs to raga music and the fact that each one of their kritis demonstrates the grammar and phrases that govern the raga, with a wide range for individual variation and excellence. In addition, kritis of a few other eminent composers have also been taken to analyse the changes on this aspect. Varnam in the raga is also included since varnam exhibits swara roopa of a raga. [The commencing phrases of the melody in the raga are given in appendix.]

The subject matter

Anandabhairavi brims with shadja, panchama swaras that form the core of the raga. These swaras reign as primary and ruling graha swaras. They occur as commencing swaras in most cases, in all the sections, viz. pallavi, anupallavi and charanam. Shadjam and panchamam, both also take the jaru gamaka. Recurrence of the swaras - shadjam and panchamam in the beginning phrases add luster and reveal the raga instantly. The samvadi relationship between shadjam and panchamam although quite common to many ragas, is an integral part of Anandabhairavi raga itself.

While Anandabhairavi is a sampurna raga with 7 swaras and with additional 3 anya swaras, not

many qualify to be its graha swaras. Though three anya swaras are there, they have no role as graha swaras in Anandabhairavi. No status as graha swara is given to them, even by modern composers.

The exaltation of the shadjam and panchamam as graha swaras in their own right

Shadjam being the graha swara -

Shadjam, the basic tonic note for all ragas in our classical music today, is king incarnate in Anandabhairavi. The graha swara here is by and large, madhya shadjam. The melodic phrasing is a one-way route progressing upwards. Even in anupallavi and charanam, the graha swara is mostly madhya shadjam. However it may straightaway travel from madhya S to tara Ś in the first phrase itself.

S as a graha swara in other sections of the kriti, assumes various magnitudes in Anandabhairavi. It sounds with anuswaras of R, P, Ś, and comes with attachments such as (mp)S, (nś)S, (R)S, etc.

Sthayi relationship of madhya and tara shadjam lends distinctive charm to the raga. Shadjam is very often rendered with a characteristic downward grace from rishabham being heard as (rGr)S, but spelt as S. In other words, this is a rare case of a single swara rendered as a core prayoga of the raga itself.

To cite an example of shadjam in Anandabhairavi - in *Marivere gati* of Shyama Shastri, in the anupallavi "Sharanagata...", the initial two avartanas in Mishra Chapu remain at S/Ś itself. A notable feature is that sahitya syllables fill these S's.

The upward / downward glide is special in Anandabhairavi.

Panchamam being the graha swara -

Panchamam occurs with long karvais. As sangatis progress, panchamam may remain constant and the succeeding phrases change course, eg: *O Jagadamba, Neeke teliyaka, Singara velavan, Anandeshwarena, Manasaguruguha, Paradevate, etc.*

Panchamam as a single swara, constitutes a whole phrase in the kriti - *O Jagadamba*, the karvai of the graha swara extending to 16 matras. This is a unique quality of the raga indeed.

Other graha swaras of Anandabhairavi

Mandra Nishadam is a graha swara for the raga.

Anandabhairavi joins the league of ragas like Kambhoji and Kedaram that have graha swaras in mandra region (mandra P) in varnams. The Ata tala varnam of Veenai Kuppiar in Anandabhairavi starts with mandra nishadam as:

Sami nee pai ; ; ; N;S,n sgrη SMG,r ggmmP

Gandharam as a graha swara in compositions is found minimally in Anandabhairavi. Gandharam while occurring as a graha swara takes nokku (beat) gamaka from shadjam while

proceeding up as GMP or a glide while proceeding down as GrS.

Madhyamam as a graha swara is found in the pallavi of Shyama Shastri's *Mahilo amba* (Adi MPM;;pmgr rGrS; Though madhyamam occasionally figures as the starting swara including sections, it is more often highlighted as a core swara in the first phrase of charanam of kritis. (eg) *Mariveregati, Dandayudhapanim, Manasaguruguha, Adinamuninchi, Mahilo amba*

The relationship between the graha swaras of pallavi, anupallavi and charanam is invariably samvadi. They are S-P or S-M or P-Ś.

Reference to few melodies

- The kriti *Pahi giriraja sute* of Shyama Shastri starts with S-P-Ś samvadi swaras. It may be observed here that these swaras go straight without any intermittent notes. Generally tuning involves these notes. For this raga, it is a phrase.
- As everyone is aware, special sanchara of ndnś occurs as commencing phrase in the geetam in Anandabhairavi, *Kamala Sulochana*. This geetam does not have shuddha dhaivatam, antara gandharam and kakali nishadam.
- The practice of rendering the kriti *Kamalamba samrakshatu* beginning with either of the two dhaivathams (shuddha dhaivatham/ chatushruti dhaivatham) exists.

Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarshini classifies the raga under 20th mela Nariritigaulai and as a Upanga raga. However, Subbarama Dikshitar indicates the practice of usage of panchasruti dhaivatham, 170 years after Venkatamakhi. According to Sampradaya Pradarshini, *Kamalamba samrakshatu* starts with shuddha dhaivatham. This shuddha dhaivatham is indicated to be sung from the swara sthana of panchamam with odukkal gamaka (stationed on a swara, if the next higher swara is sung/played from this lower position itself through pushing). In practice, it is sung as PdMp MG mPm gRS. The winding swara (ending note of the melody) here is madhyamam.

- Papanasam Sivan has composed a song *Nanganallur ezhundarul sarvamangale*: P;RŚ;śnśndP. This quite often occurs as an intermittent phrase in raga alapana.

- The raga traces its roots to very old tunes - Kurathi paattu and Oonjal paattu

Pachamalai pavalamalai engal malai amme
P p p P p p d p M Gm pM gr G

Palale kalalambi pattale thudachu
gm PP P p p p gm Pm g r G

Manodharma

Coming to raga alapana aspect in manodharma :

- Raga alapana in Anandabhairavi starts with the swaras, panchamam, nishadam, gandharam. Phrases could be:

P....NP... mgmPM MpmGRG.....
gMP..P.. P.. pmpnP.M.. gM, P..M..GrG.....
N...P..P.. mpNP. NPM mgmPmGRG....

Panchamam takes off plain or with a jaru from shadjam. Gandharam either comes with a nokku (beat) from shadjam or as a hrsva swara. Gandharam as a graha swara is more popular in manodharmam than in kalpitam. Nishadam is with odukkal gamaka from panchamam or with a jaru. Here the N is cut short and not prolonged. No oscillation for N, as a graha swara in raga alapana.

- Tanam may start with the same graha swaras panchamam, gandharam, nishadam. Tanam may also figure in a ragamalika tanam. When tanam is sung, these swaras would be the core swaras in the melody.
- Kalpana swaras while sung for kritis, are for melodic phrases starting at panchamam where madhyamam occurs as the winding (ending) note or phrases starting with shadjam where nishadam is the winding note.

General

The chief resting swaras are panchamam, gandharam.

Panchamam is both a graha swara and a resting swara of Anandabhairavi

Chatushruti dhaivatham occurs more often and dominates than shuddha dhaivatham. In the prayoga pdpś - the chatushruti dhaivatham is almost heard as pnpś. The same swara sounds different in Śndp.

The occurrence of antara gandhara and kakali nishada is to be found only in certain specific and rare sancharas like p m g G M / ś d n ś and sparingly used. These serve as adornment to bring out the melodic individuality of the raga. The phrase sdñS with kakali N is sung when concluding the raga alapana.

The vakratva in arohana scales in uttaranga pdpS prayoga is common to ragas such as Begada, Anandabhairavi, Poorvikalyani and all these have chatushruti dhaivatham. But in Anandabhairavi, this chatushruti D sounds as kaishiki N.

Any raga alapana, in general, hardly ends with a swara other than S (mostly madhya). But in Anandabhairavi, alapana mostly ends with madhya P, which is a unique feature. If it has to end with S, the anya swara occurs in the closing phrase.

This is a raga with limited winding swaras. If shadjam is graha, the ending note is mandra nishadam. If panchamam is graha, then madhyamam becomes the winding note. *

Comparison of Anandabhairavi with its allied raga Ritigaulai

Ritigaulai (sgrgmndmns sndmgmpmgs) is an allied raga of Anandabhairavi. Both ragas have common swaras and also identical mode of progression in the lower tetrachord viz. s g r g m - g m p m g r s. However, the swara movements, the prayogas, the gamakas unique to each raga all serve to distinguish each other.

- The prayoga snp in mandra sthayi is quite characteristic of Ritigaulai and serves to discriminate it from Anandabhairavi where sancharas below the mandra sthayi nishada are carefully avoided.
- Gandharam is one of the powerful graha swaras in compositions for Ritigaulai eg *Nannu vidachi, Dwaitamu sukham, Sitanayaka, Sadguru swamiki* unlike Anandabhairavi, where the incidence of G as a graha swara in compositions is less.
- The course of melodic phrase in kritis starting with panchamam differs in both ragas. For Ritigaulai the melodic flow is mostly downwards as PMGRS in the opening phrase resting at S, whereas for Anandabhairavi the phrase moves in both directions resting with P and S as well.
- There is no Anandabhairavi without panchamam. Ritigaulai can be elaborated without panchamam at least in manodharma for a while. However, panchamam is a very important graha swara of Ritigaulai.
- Not many janta prayogas occur in Anandabhairavi like Ritigaulai.
- Anandabhairavi has S and P as main graha swaras with G and N in a smaller measure whereas Ritigaulai has S, P, N and G as main graha swaras.

Appendix

Shyama Shastri	Adinamuninchi pogadi - Tripura	;S; s G r gm P;; a di namu nin chi
	Himachalatanaya - Adi	S SG R GM P D P;; hi ma cha lata nayabro
	O Jagadamba - Adi	P;;; ;;; P,d dPM, G M; P; O ja gadam
	Mahilo amba - Adi	M P M;;; pmgr rGrS; mahilo am ba
	Marivere - Mishra Chapu	P,P, P;;; pmpnP P,n nPm mGM, marive re
	Pahi shri giriraja sute - Roopakam	S; P; Ś; ND dpdpM mgM;; pa hi sri giri
	Samini rammanave - varnam- Ata tala	;;; sdpm grgm pmgm grgrS
Dikshitar	Abhayamba - Adi	S sp P; P; P; mdpm GR S; a bhayamba
	Anandeshwarena - Mishra chapu	P;; Ś; ŚNND; P; a nan de shwa re
	Dandayudhapanim - Roopakam	P; Ś; N D P, m MP;; danda yudhapa nim
	Kamalamba samrakshatu - Mishra chapu	D P; mG, mPm mGR;S kamalam ba
	Manasa guruguha - Roopakam	P; Pnp pm M,pM,pmGR; gmP ma na sa gu ru
Thyagaraja	Paradevate - Adi	P M gmPM Mpm GR S para de va te
	Thyagaraja - Roopakam	S; S,pmP ;P; pgr,GS S Ś, r śN N śnS;; thyagara ja
	Rama rama neevaramu - Adi	;Gm P P P pnpmpmG,m pd P, ra marama
	Ksheera sagara vihara - Khanda chapu	S; srRgr S S S snNS;; kshee rasa gara
	Neeke teliyaka - Adi	;PS, śś ndP Pdp Mpm G,r GMP; neeke te li ya ka

Ragamalikas Of The Dikshitar Family

Susha Chandran.P

The music of India is unique amongst the musical systems of the world. It has a wide repertoire of musical forms composed and set to a specific raga and tala. These forms help in bringing out the melodic beauty of the raga with its swara sancharas and vishesha prayogas. There are various musical forms in Carnatic music such as geeta, varna, swarajati, keertana, kriti, ragamalika, padam, javali, tillana etc. The ragamalika occupies a special status among these forms. As its name indicates, the ragamalika is a string of different ragas within a particular piece. The term "ragamalika" is used in both kalpita sangeeta and kalpana sangeeta. In kalpita sangeeta, it usually refers to a composition having a pallavi, anupallavi and many charanas set in different ragas and a specific tala. In the sphere of kalpana or manodharma sangeeta, shlokams or viruttams are sung in different ragas and manodharma swaras are sung in different ragas in addition to the main raga during pallavi rendition. There is also a tradition of playing of ragamalika tanam in veena performances. For a student of music it helps to acquire swara as well as raga jnanam whereas for performers, it is a real challenge for their skill in handling the different ragas with ease. For the listener, it is very appealing as it portrays various colours of ragas with their respective rasas. It is a welcome item in a concert as the change of raga in each section captivates the mind of the listener. This musical form is said to have evolved as a result of man's innovative urge to create newer and novel patterns for variety.

The practice of singing in different ragas within a single piece can be traced to the method of singing called "Anuganam" in the Vedic period. In this method, the "Riks" as well as the "gana" was different and independent for each part. These "Ganas" or "Samans" were to be sung with their corresponding Riks. In this method of singing, we find "Dasanuganam" which consist of ten Samans on ten different Riks, "Panchanuganam" with five Samans and five Riks, and "Ekavimsatyanuganam" with eleven Samans and eleven Riks. This may be considered as the earliest reference to the evolution of the ragamalika. In the prabandha period, the ragamalika is said to have evolved from the Ragakadamba prabandhas which were ragatalamalikas. During the prabandha period, they enjoyed an important status as we get reference to it in most of the lakshana granthas written during different centuries. These, like most of the other prabandhas were long tedious compositions bound by rules regarding its vrittas, angas, talas etc. Due to these limitations, the prabandhas declined and were gradually replaced by newer forms. The "ragakadamba prabandha" too shed its tala and vritta structure and evolved as a form called "ragamalika" which laid more stress on the usage of ragas in its different sections within the same composition.

The ragamalika in its initial form must have emerged during the 16th and 17th centuries. The pre-Trinity composers Purandaradasa, Annamacharya, Virabhadrayya, Ramaswami Dikshitar etc created an apt atmosphere for Carnatic music to grow in all its aspects. Pure musical forms gained importance. The Trinity-Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, and Shyama Shastri with their divine outpourings gave a new impetus to Carnatic music. Their compositions were models to a generation of composers who tried out their creative skill in bringing out the varied colours of a raga. We find the emergence of many musical forms assuming a definite shape and structure. Ragamalika also was no exception and a more definite structure was formed.

Ragamalikas are enjoyable forms. They usually have a pallavi, and anupallavi followed by many charanas which are set in different ragas. In some ragamalikas, anupallavi is dispensed

Veenai Kuppiar	Sami nee pai - Ata tala varna	-; ; ; N;S,n sgrn SMG,r ggmmP
Papanasam Sivan	Ninai maname Roopakam	n S g R G;;
Papanasam Sivan	Vanor vanangum - Adi	nSG,r gmpdP
Gopalakrishna Bharathi	Soppanam kandu kondan - Mishra Chapu	;grS;S,nSgRGMP
Swarajathi	Raa ve maguva - Adi	P; pmgmPM pmgr S
Harikesanallur Muthaiah Bhagavatar	Mahavishnu sodari - Adi	P P; mgMP
Harikesanallur Muthaiah Bhagavatar	Pankaja lochani - Padavarnam - Adi	P; PP M,p grgm P
Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar	Satbhakti - Roopakam	P; M,d pmgr S
Papanasam Sivan	Singara velavan - Adi	P,P,M mgpMgR S;;
Papanasam Sivan	Ananda bhairavi - Adi	P;; PDP mgpm GRS
Ramaswami Dikshitar	Amba nee sharanamu - Adi	;P P; P,m mgM P
Ettayapuram Maharaja	Muruka tarukilaiya - Mishra Eka	P P; pdP;

* The winding swara need not always be the adjacent swara to the graha swara in the raga. For example, in the raga Kambhoji, for kritis having the graha swara as madhyamam - G, P and also D occur as winding notes. The ending with dhaivatham to start at M with/without P touch (with spuritam of pmM or Pdm) sounds fine. If a kriti starts with the phrase MGMP, then the ending could be srg whereas if the phrase opens up as mgpdS, D occurring as an ending note is characteristic of the raga. This is a distinguishing feature of that particular graha swara, which permits different winding swaras.

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We hope we will continue to be worthy of their assistance in future.

with and we find a pallavi and many charanas. A unique feature of the ragamalika is that it should have multiple charanas rendered in different ragas. The minimum number of ragas that can occur in a ragamalika is three and the maximum number of ragas can vary according to the theme and the composer's innovative skill. As the ragamalikas have many charanas, they are the longest compositions that we come across in Carnatic music. Most of the ragamalikas are devotional, but can also be in praise of a patron. Another peculiarity seen is that there should be a naturalness in the selection of ragas as it should not lose its aesthetic beauty from the beginning to the end.

The earliest stage of development of the ragamalika is characterised by charanas being sung in different ragas. Addition of ragamudras was the next stage. This was followed by the introduction of additional and decorative angas such as chittaswara, makuta swara and viloma chittaswara. Still later it was followed by the addition of swara sahitya for the chitta swara and in some ragamalikas of a later stage, we find sollukattus being introduced. Thus the ragamalika has a colourful history in its evolution and development into the modern ragamalika which has a constructive form comprising of ragamudras, prabandha mudra, chitta swara, makuta swara, swara sahitya, viloma krama chitta swara, and sollukattu swara which provide scope for an interesting study. By the time of the Trinity, we find the ragamalika concept invading other musical forms too and we have ragamalika tanavarnam, ragamalika padavarnam, ragamalika swarajati, ragamalika keertanam, ragamalika daru, ragamalika padam, ragamalika tillana and so on. As the concept of raga developed, newer patterns were tried out by vaggeyakaras thus bringing variety and innovation to the musical form. It is indeed man's quest for newer possibilities that has guided this musical form to the exalted position that it has achieved today in vocal and instrumental concerts.

Ragamalika compositions have been created by many composers. However Shahaji Maharaja of Tanjore was the earliest to have done so. He is said to have composed a ragamalika in Marathi, a ragamalika daru, etc. He has composed a Sanskrit verse in praise of his presiding deity Lord Thyagaraja in fourteen ragas ending with Gaula. Another great composer who has contributed much to the emergence of the ragamalika was Melattur Virabhadrayya. He was one of the musical giants of his time and was a prolific composer of varna, swarajati, ragamalika, tillana, and keertanas. He has composed two ragamalikas *Na mohananguni* in six ragas and *Ninnukori* in five ragas. His ragamalikas are beautiful compositions with splendid chittaswaras and ragamudras, and were an inspiration for his illustrious disciple, Ramaswami Dikshitar who followed in his footsteps. Ramaswami Dikshitar was a reputed composer of ragamalikas and he passed on this tradition to his son and disciple, Muthuswami Dikshitar who perfected it. The ragamalikas composed by the members of the Dikshitar family are perfect examples of their genius and skill in composing.

Ramaswami Dikshitar has composed four ragamalikas in Telugu which are all lengthy compositions with twenty or more ragas in its sections. Of these, the *Natakadi Vidyalyaya* which is a pada varna is considered as his magnum opus. This "Ashtottara-Shata-Raga-Tala Malika" was composed by Ramaswami Dikshitar in hundred and eight ragas and talas in honour of Chinnaswami Mudaliar and it is said that Ramaswami Dikshitar was honoured with Kanakaabhishekam for this brilliant composition. It is indeed unfortunate that we have only sixty one ragas available in the notation of this classic composition. This is a fine example of a Raga-Tala-Malika. He has made use of the seven Suladi and marga talas in this composition. Another ragamalika composed by him is in forty eight ragas when his younger son Chinnaswami Dikshitar lost his eye sight. He prayed to Lord Venkatesha at Tirupati and consequently his son regained his

eye sight. He also composed two other ragamalikas, one in praise of Goddess Meenakshi in thirty eight ragas and another on Devi in twenty ragas. Most of his ragamalikas are very lengthy with the raga mudras woven in beautifully and this skill was adopted very well by his son in all his compositions.



Muthuswami Dikshitar has composed four ragamalikas in Sanskrit and all are veritable jewels decorated with prasa, yati, etc. Of these ragamalikas, the longest one is in praise of Lord Viswanatha at Kulikkarai in fourteen ragas. A unique feature in this ragamalika is that at the end of each section, sahitya is rendered in the reverse order in order to fit into the opening phrase of the pallavi. The raga names are cleverly incorporated. Another one is a Dashavatara ragamalika in ten ragas based on the ten avatars of Lord Maha Vishnu. Here each section has a chittaswara. He has made use of the five ghana ragas along with five other ragas in this composition. Dikshitar has composed a ragamalika in six ragas on Goddess Kamalamba of Tiruvarur. A peculiar feature of this ragamalika is that all the six ragas are janyas of Shankarabharanam. The raga names are incorporated beautifully. The smallest one among his ragamalikas is on Goddess Lalitamba in four ragas. This "chaturragamalika" is called "Mangalaragamalika" as they are also the ragas used for singing mangalams. Each section is adorned with fine chittaswaras at the end. Muthuswami Dikshitar's skill in composing ragamalikas was taken up by his adopted son, Subbarama Dikshitar who proved a disciple worthy of carrying on the great lineage.



Subbarama Dikshitar has composed about eleven ragamalikas which are all splendid compositions. Except for one in Tamil, all his ragamalikas are in Telugu. In his *Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarshini*, he has spoken about the ragamalikas composed by Ramaswami Dikshitar, Muthuswami Dikshitar, and his own ragamalikas. One of the most important of his ragamalikas is the one illustrating the seventy two melakartas based on the asampoorna melapaddhati. He has set the music for this ragamalika which was written by his Telugu teacher, Krishna Kavi. Subbarama Dikshitar has composed a ragamalika in praise of Lord Parthasarathy in thirty two ragas written in honour of Ananda Gajapati Raja of Vizianagaram. He has also composed a ragamalika in ten ragas in honour of Venkatagiri Raja. Another important composition is a Navaragamalika varna in nine ragas in praise of Lord Guha written in honour of Bhaskara Setupati, Raja of Ramanathapuram. He has composed four other Navaragamalikas each of which are in praise of different deities but to honour the then Maharajas Jagadvira Rama Edappa Maharaja of Ettayapuram, Sri Ramavarma Kulasekhara of Travancore, etc. He has also composed a ragamalika in Tamil in six ragas which is in praise of Kandaperumal of Kazhugumalai. Two other ragamalikas are also attributed to him, one in five ragas and the other in four ragas. As we see and analyse the ragamalikas of Dikshitar family, we come to the conclusion that the musical form ragamalika reached its peak of glory at the hands of these great vaggeyakaras. These compositions are marvels in the sphere of both lakshana and lakshya and have been models for composers like Mahavaidyanatha Iyer and others who composed exquisite compositions with novel patterns and combinations.

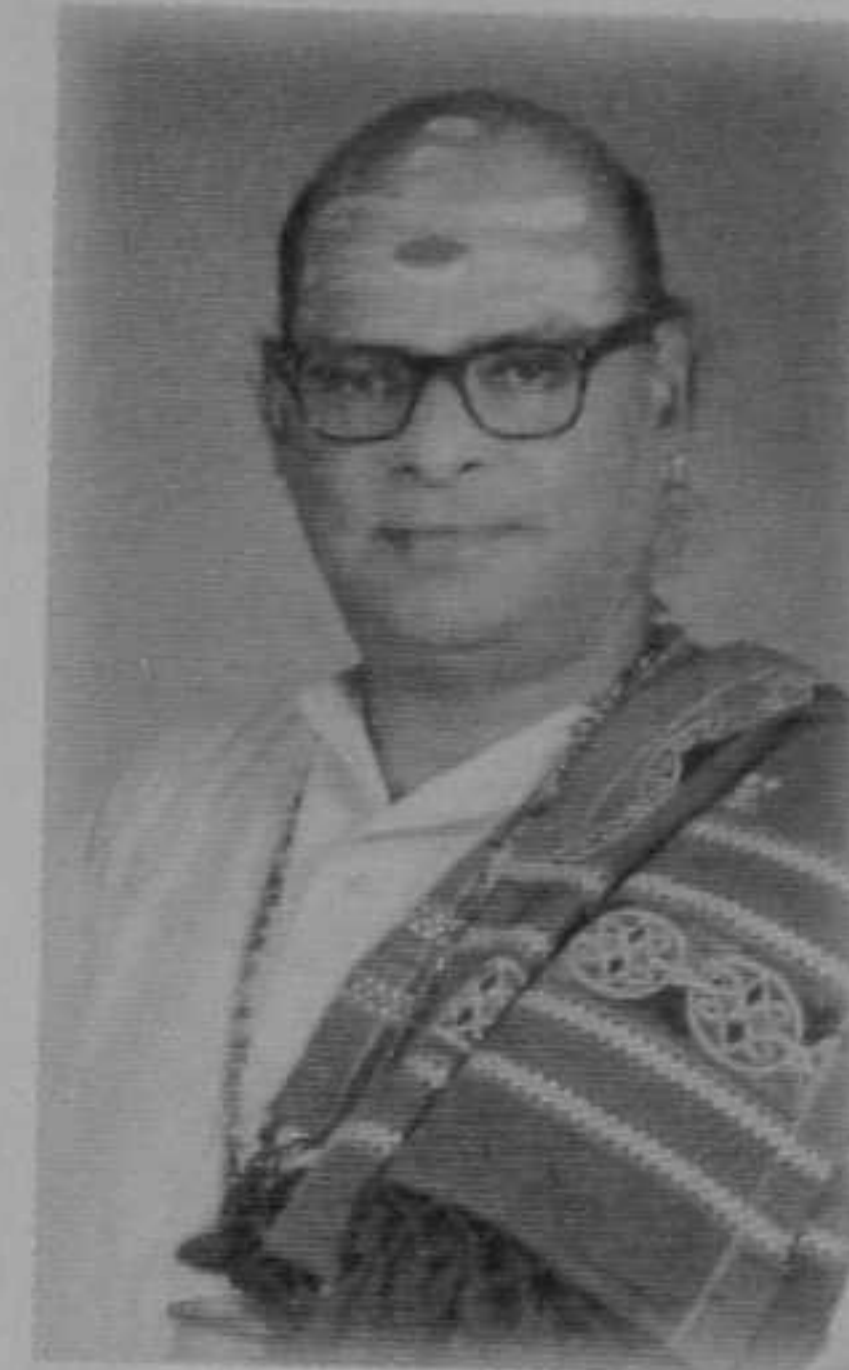
LIST OF RAGAMALIKAS OF THE DIKSHITAR FAMILY WITH DETAILS.

Sl No	Starting Phrase of The Ragamalika	No. of Ragas	Tala	Name of the Composer	Language
1.	Naatakaadi Vidya	61	61 Talas	Ramaswami Dikshitar	Telugu
2.	Manasaaveri Tarula	48	Roopaka	Ramaswami Dikshitar	Telugu
3.	Shivamohana Shakti	44	Adi	Ramaswami Dikshitar	Telugu
4.	Saamajagamini	20	Adi	Ramaswami Dikshitar	Telugu
5.	Shri Vishwanatham Bhajeham	14	Adi	Muthuswami Dikshitar	Sanskrit
6.	Madhavo Mampaatu	10	Roopaka	Muthuswami Dikshitar	Sanskrit
7.	Poomachandrabimba	6	Roopaka	Muthuswami Dikshitar	Sanskrit
8.	Simhasanasthite Sundara	4	Roopaka	Muthuswami Dikshitar	Sanskrit
9.	E Kanakambari	72	Adi	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
10.	Kaaminchina Kalavati Ra	32	Tishra Eka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
11.	Priyamu Nayamekori	10	Tishra Eka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
12.	Garavamu Ganna	9	Roopaka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
13.	Endukurara	9	Roopaka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
14.	Nee Sarilerani	9	Tishra Ekam	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
15.	Shri Yamuna	9	Eka Tala	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
16.	Shri Ganalola	9	Roopaka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
17.	Manatodinangina	6	Adi	Subbarama Dikshitar	Tamil
18.	Vedukato	5	Roopaka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu
19.	Valapumiri	4	Roopaka	Subbarama Dikshitar	Telugu

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The Natyacharya of Vazhuvoor



This article is reproduced from Dr. Sulochana Rajendran's articles in the Free Press Journal dated 18th December 1991 and the Indian Express dated 23rd January 1992

"Naadar mudimelirukkum Naagapaambe, Nachuppaiyai Vaiththirukkum Nallapaambe"...

... goes the enchanting melody from the snake charmer's magudi and the 'snake' swirls, slithers, coils and recoils all in a trance but not a bit ferocious. Only it is not a snake, but a damsel dancing. The impact was exhilarating, it has to be experienced! Need it be said that the child artiste (Baby Kamala) became a legend overnight and the master craftsman, the Guru (Vazhuvoor Ramiah Pillai) a much sought after *natyacharya*?

The doyen of the Vazhuvoor School, the octogenarian guru passed away recently. The loss to the family and the dance world is immeasurable, but one can vouchsafe for the continuity of the *bani*, the tradition, thanks to careful grooming of a *shishya parampara* by the doyen. The Vazhuvoor school has grown, nurtured by his son Samraj (a guru in his own right). Swamimalai Rajaratnam, K.J. Sarasa and Gopalakrishna also gurus of eminence have branched off to scale newer heights along with a number of *shishyas* who hold aloft the school's flag with their own personal trimmings.

The success of the guru coincided with the democratisation of the art when the patronage shifted from royal courts to the public stage and cinema, becoming a powerful medium. Traditionally trained in the art of nattuvangam and dance, in the *Silambakkoodam* of his home town Vazhuvoor by his maternal uncle and guru Manickam, he played second fiddle in teaching and conducting programmes.

The year 1938 was a turning point in the life of this *natyacharya*. A call came to compose dance for films. From Vazhuvoor to Madras, from small-town temple *kutcheris* to big banner film dance choreography was a great leap forward for the 28 year old Ramiah. Not only was it a challenge for him to face, but it also opened avenues for experimenting with his talent, training and knowledge. Hailing from a family of musicians and *nattuvanars*, Ramiah Pillai was naturally trained in all the allied arts of *geetam*, *vadyam* and *nrityam*, plus the languages. His innate versatility bloomed when opportunities came his way and he availed of them without losing his grip over tradition and the training he had undergone.

It needs no reiteration that dance in films gained him an unusual popularity and elite families wanted him to train their daughters in traditional Bharatanatyam. His popularity rose especially with one single student, Baby Kamala (later Kamala Laxman). *Naga Nritya*, Subramanya Bharatiar's patriotic songs and chaste Bharatanatyam numbers came alive through Kamala. And overnight the guru and shishya became a rage.

The master heeded the call of patriotism and choreographed Bharatiyar songs such as *Aduvome Pallu Paaduvome*, *Vetri Ettu Dikkum Etta Kottu Murase* etc., for the stage and films. Sensing the direction the wind then blew, he popularised dance *margams* by choreographing *varnams* and *padams* in Tamil. He brought the temple ritual, *Todayamangalam* to the dance

platform. Cast in lilting ragamalika it became the unique invocation stamp of the Vazhuvoor school. Arunachalakavi's Ramanataka kritis, Tyagaraja's pancharatnas, Swati Tirunal's ragamalikas, Subramanya Bharatiyar's patriotic songs and Kannan pattu, Andal Pasurams, Tamil padams, Tamil lyrics to popular Telugu varnams, mini ballet, major dance dramas and *Naga Nritya* - the repertoire he choreographed was vast. But in whatever he did he remained within traditional norms.

Fluid grace and a deep but subtle feel for abhinaya were the hallmarks of the Vazhuvoor bani. The flowing movements were accentuated by *adavus* marked by feather touch footwork and leaps. His penchant for *nritya* intricacies could be perceived from the *jati* sequences he wove even for kritis which he presented in the relaxed phase of post-varnam sessions. The striking sculpturesque poses that bring on a frieze beauty to the fluid movements were, as he claimed, his contribution. These were the result of his study and experiments on the 108 *karanas*.


Opinions are divided about his involvement in *abhinaya*. Even among his students, some feel that the master did not delve deep enough into the evocations of a song or a *sahitya*. But others contend that what he choreographed was just how it should be. He neither underplayed a bhava nor over-enacted it. "He made Bharatanatyam interesting to all kinds of people without sacrificing the classical form" said one of his prime disciples continuing, "Probably he had not known the word 'choreography' then but his choreography was excellent and that made people sit up and watch". His *solkattu* rendition had a melodic ring. And that attracted many a student, including Kamala, to him. It also brought accolades from his contemporaries and senior *Nattuvanars*.

Ramiah Pillai had personality and stature and he added dignity to nattuvangam. Plus he had the charisma to carry the audience with him. It was 1962. A Bharatanatyam recital conducted by Ramiah Pillai, was in progress at Vigyan Bhavan, Delhi. It was one of the many defence-fund-raising programmes held during the Chinese aggression. An announcement from backstage, *Sadhinchane*, a *varnam* by Thyagaraja, sent the audience into bewilderment. A *varnam*? By Saint Thyagaraja? At the subsequent press meet with the Natyacharya, scribes attacked him with questions "Is it not a Pancharatna kriti?", "Would it not have been appropriate to announce it as Thyagaraja's Pancharatna choreographed in the Varnam format? (which it was)". "Why, the saint composed it as a varnam for Tiruvarur Kamalam (Thyagaraja's disciple) to dance!" was his answer. That silenced many of the scribes, but not an ardent student of music and dance present at the meet. "Was not Kamalam a disciple of Muthuswami Dikshitar (a contemporary)? How could she be in Thyagaraja's gurukulam," this student asked. "Read your history carefully" was the scornful retort of the natyacharya. That the very same natyacharya later on, hailed the *Pancharatnas* as most suitable to be cast in *Varnam* format in dance because of their beautiful *swara-sahityas*, is quite a different matter, not relevant here. But what is relevant is the way he took "history" in his stride and got away with it!

Many of the eminent dancers and film heroines of today have at one time or the other been groomed by him. Kamala, Rhadha, Vyjayantimala, Padma Subrahmanyam, Hema Malini, Vijayaraghavan, E.V. Saroja, Chitra Visveswaran, Anandhi - Radha and Kanaka. Many of his students have settled abroad making the Vazhuvoor bani international.

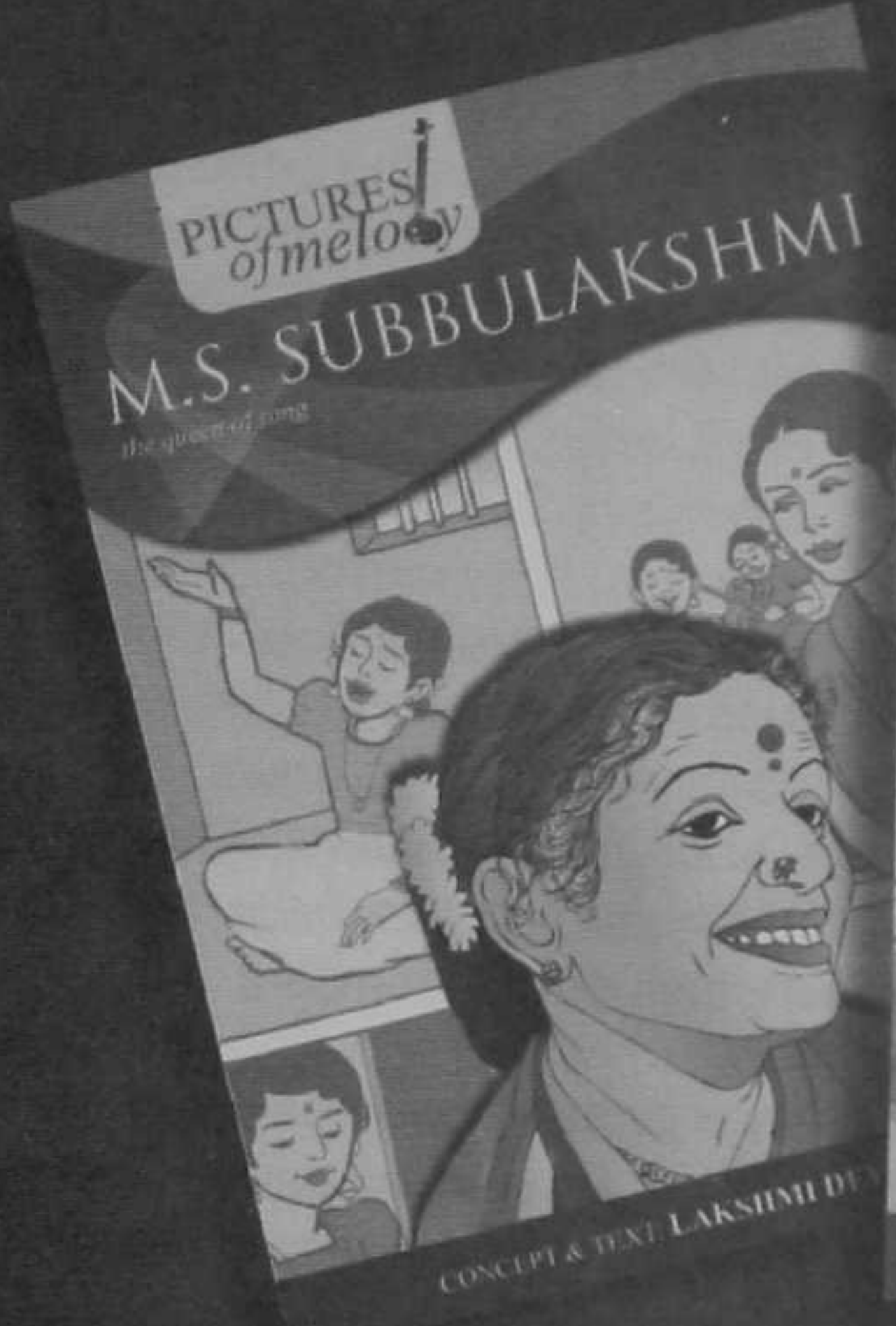
Ramiah Pillai was the recipient of many honours and titles. Among these were Natyakalakesari from the Indian National Congress, Isai Perarignar from Tamil Isai Sangam, Kalaimamani from the State Government, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Padma Shri.

This towering personality may be absent from the dance scene. But the rich legacy he bequeathed to his scions will continue for long, holding aloft the Vazhuvoor bani.

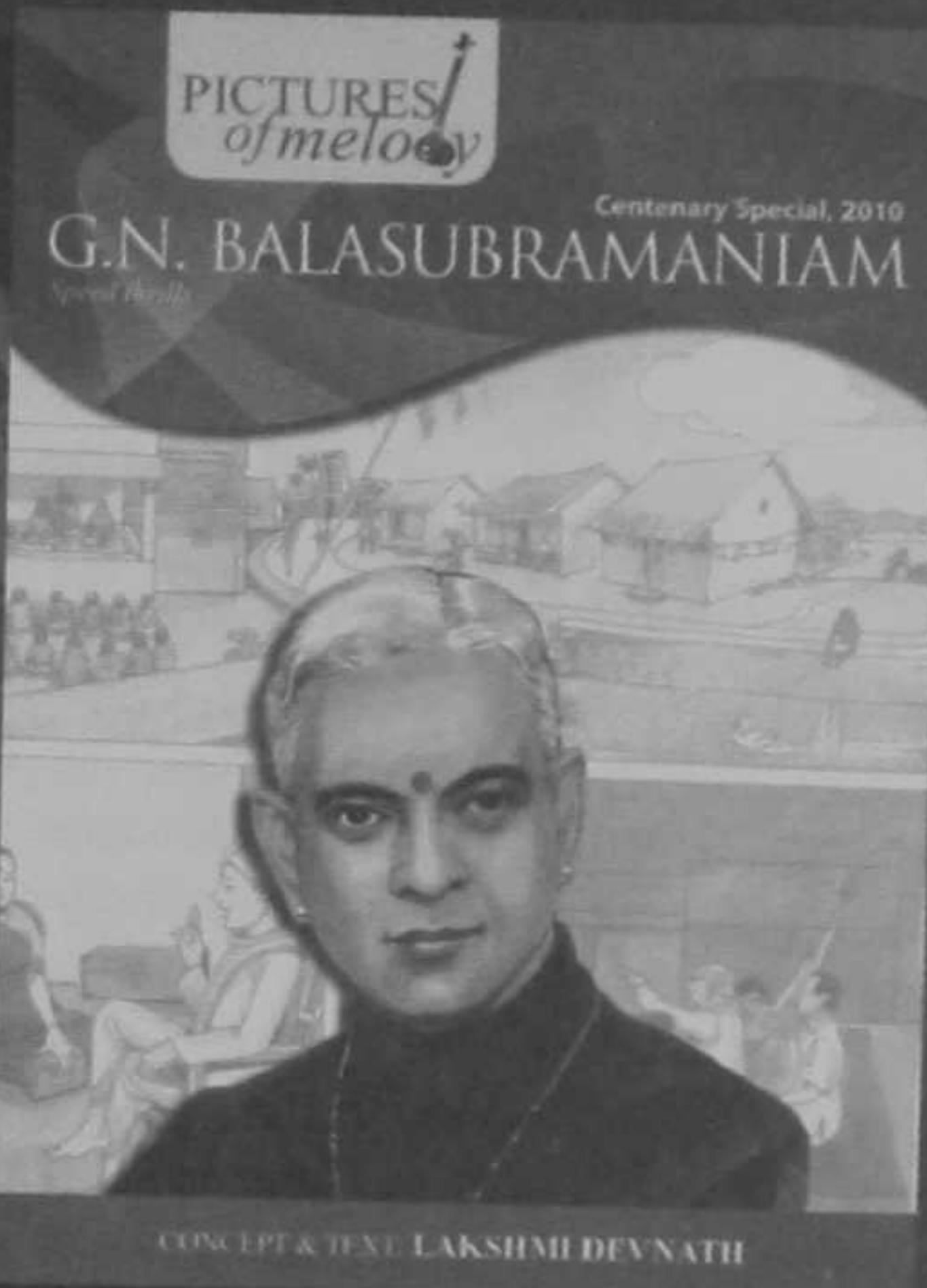


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Lakshmi Devnath is the author of the bestseller 'Poorva Magic Miracles and the Mystical Twelve', 'A Class Apart' and the authorised biography of Sri Lalgudi G Jayaraman, to be published by Harper Collins. She has to her credit more than 200 articles on Carnatic music and other aspects of Indian culture.

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Aesthetic Values In Sabhagana

Jyotsna Sivakumar

In Indian culture the highest goal for any human being is attaining mukti or nirvana. So every aspect of life is dovetailed to the attainment of this goal. The very way we eat, sleep, dress or go about our daily chores is attuned to this goal. Therefore our arts and fine arts were also subsumed to this ideal. Indian classical music is therefore not mere entertainment. It enhances our perception of beauty in sound, keeps us intellectually involved and takes us away from our mundane life. It makes us aware of our rich and ancient tradition. As it is a vital part of our culture, the onus is on all of us to preserve and nourish it.

Classical music is the most immediate of the fine arts. As a performing art its faults and beauties are unrepeatable because each time a musician's creative imagination performs with a different twist or accent. Music is most natural and spontaneous and lives in the now, today and in the moment. It is created on the spot, extempore.

Sabha gana

Sabha gana or kutcheri music is in a constant process of evolution even today. Way back in the previous century a Carnatic music concert used to be an elaborate affair extending to 4 or 5 hours. There have been night-long concerts, the duration being 7-12 hours. Documentations of various musicologists show that a particular vocalist or instrumentalist elaborated a particular raga for hours. Such possibilities seemingly existed a hundred years back, before the advent of institutions or sabhas and when performances mostly happened in temples.

The concert pattern underwent a significant change in the first quarter of the 20th century. We owe it to Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar for his invention of the kutcheri paddhati. When he began his performance career he assiduously studied the concert practices of his contemporary musicians. He figured out that each musician offered something unique and that everyone had a different approach and bani and the significant aspects were emulated by him. The concert format that he designed became standard for all time.

If music has to retain grip and power it has to be presented in a manner that is meaningful to the contemporary generation. The artiste participates in the contemporary thinking. He is sensitive to the cultural climate, thinking and expectation of his times. He is conditioned by kaladesa dharma or vartamana. Rasikas fully respond to the raga swaroopa evolved by modern minds. Manodharma as well as kalpita sangeeta is acceptable only if it comes in the accents of today.

The dynamics of sabha gana are the raga-kriti corpus, the performer and the audience.

The raga-kriti corpus

A kriti is built around the raga core. When the perception of the raga changes, the way in which the kriti is expressed also subtly changes. The frame and inner structure of the kriti remains the same, only the flair with which the kriti is expressed changes with the passage of time. It is a very flexible musical form. Eighty percent of the kriti should be sung in the way the composer has conceived it. The remaining depends on the way the performer fashions it and makes it his

personal expression. Most kritis are poignant expressions of the vaggeyakara and the performer has to enter the bhava of the kriti by comprehending the thoughts of the composer. However the same kriti sung in the same way each time would be a lack-lustre and monotonous affair and therefore slight embellishments here and there are certainly necessary to make it sound fresh.

Each kriti demands a different, sensitive kalapramana and niraval that must be adjusted to its raga-laya setting and its sahitya bhava. In fact we do not sing kalpanaswaras for padams because they carry lofty meanings and the swaraprastharas destroy the delicate bhava of the padam. We also need to think deeply on whether a kriti is to be treated like a pallavi which is expected to incorporate laya intricacies and showcase the creative abilities of musicians on the stage.

Raga alapanā is the essence of Carnatic music. The performing artiste who has the ability or capacity to elaborate a raga to the maximum possible extent is admired because of gana rasa. In the past we have had performers who had raga names prefixed to their names, for example, Todi Sitaramaiyya, Narayanagaula Kuppier. Even Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer was given the title of Maha after he elaborated the raga Chakravakam at the tender age of 13. The raga in the kriti is a living entity, like language. The more it is used with skill, the more it glows. Ancient ragas like Todi and Shankarabharanam have developed a vitality and personality lacking in new ragas. But ragas like Yadhukulakambhoji and Punnagavarali have a telling effect on us. Though they are limited in scope they achieve the same effect as the other expansive ones. Here is the case of less is more.

The performer

When you sing a kriti, you are apt to forget that it has been shaped by the original composer. Performers have added their shades of expressions to it and it has already acquired many layers. For example *Shri Subrahmanyaya Namaste* is attributed to various musicians because of the unique way each of them handled it in their own bani. *Shri Subrahmanyaya Namaste* has been referred to as "sangeeta gayatri" by the seer Shri Chandrashekharendra Saraswati. The kriti comes with a distinct character of its own. Therefore we should not sing but commune with the kriti as we commune with a human being.

In a concert the artiste has to make compromises and restrain his artistic self-expression. When the performer communes with the composition, he interacts with it and listens to its subtle content and this is possible only if there is empty space and stillness. The kriti then glows with the original vision of the composer combined with the personality it has acquired by interacting with earlier performers.

Except for the voice which has the potential to sing great speeds, acrobatics and showing off are detrimental to raga swaroopa. All tonal skill should serve the vision of the raga. To sing an alapana properly is to not merely adhere to the grammar but to commune with the energy form called "raga" as we commune with a living being. Fidelity to raga swaroopa is the essence of sabha gana.

In classical music, mere sweetness is like icing on the cake. It is only an additional adornment to fidelity to shruti, a sharp and deep perception of raga, vidwat, affirmation and niraya.

The performer has to tailor his concert according to the time, place and the audience. The choice of items has to be fashioned according to whether the occasion is a wedding, youth festival

or a serious recital of vidwans.

Audience

Shades of sound and tonal values make our hearing sense sharper since they are the defining features of the raga. This is why those who come to enjoy the ambience of the music should maintain scrupulous silence and avoid movements. In sabha gana stillness and silence are more than mandatory. Sabha members, organisers and cooperative audience have to work out practical methods of seating so that coming and going are restricted to peripheral places near the exit. Also cell phones intervene with the shruti of the main performer and create apashruti. No finesse of sound can be perceived if there is movement or extraneous noise.

Audience has a primordial role in determining the future of Carnatic music. They are the torchbearers of this vibrant tradition and have to pave the way for it to keep growing and reaching greater heights.

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MADURAI MANI IYER CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS



The sabha celebrates legendary musician, Sangeeta Kalanidhi late Shri Madurai Mani Iyer's birth centenary on 29th October 2011 with a concert of Shri T. V. Sankaranarayanan and a lecdem and audio visual presentation on Madurai Mani Iyer by Dr. S.A.K. Durga followed by a vocal concert of S. Amritha and S. Mahadevan, daughter and son of Shri T. V. Sankaranarayanan.

Murder On The Musical Stage

Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan

A famous Carnatic vocalist is singing, and the item is the kriti *Raghuvara nannu* in Pantuvarali ragam by Thyagaraja. As she comes to the anupallavi, she repeats the opening line "Nagadhara bhakta janaaghanivarana" with several variations, and each time the lyrics become "nagadhara bhaktaja". When she goes on to the second half of the avartanam, it is after taking a breath at the end of the laghu, so the phrase becomes "bhaktaja naaganivaarana", and the word "jana" gets split into ja in the first half of the tala cycle and na in the second. Jana is one word, and it does not make sense to sing it as "bhaktaja" but most teachers and most performers, even at the top level of eminence do not bother to avoid padach-chhedam (splitting of a pada or phrase).

Many such examples can be given - while singing the kriti *Parama pavana Rama* in Purvikalyani raga, singers invariably split the phrase "paapa vimochana" into "paapavi" and "mochana", with a breath taken in between. This again, makes nonsense of the meaning (Rama, who gives us deliverance or vimochana from our sins or paapa).

One more example - in *Meru samaana* (Mayamalavagoula raga) the second line of the pallavi ends with "Raaraa maha" but is sung invariably as "raaraama ha" with a break in between the two phrases so that "maha" gets split into "ma" and "ha".

One reason for such mutilations is that many musicians (especially those outside Andhra) do not know Telugu, the language in which Thyagaraja (and Shyama Sastri) composed their kritis. In the kriti *Rara rajeeva lochana* (Mohanam) the phrase "brochutaku" (to protect me) becomes "bro" and then separately "chutaku", after a karvai. Any number of such examples can be given (do this exercise yourself next time you are listening to a recital, watch for the sahitya and try to identify sahitya mutilations). In the kriti *Manasa Etulo* in Malayamarutam, the phrase "kalilo raajasa thaamasa" becomes "kalilora jasathaamasa", with a break after "kalilora" making a mockery of the composer's intentions and meaning.

Why not take the trouble to avoid such 'murder' of sahityam, by taking care to avoid padach-chhedam? Teachers need to first look at this, and correct their disciples if they mutilate the lyrics. Most teachers do not bother. Mine fortunately did and so I in turn tell my students not to break a phrase in between, as far as possible, and to take a breath only at appropriate gaps in between the words.

As I write I am listening to another leading vocalist singing *Annapoorna Vishalakshi* in Sama ragam. While singing the second sangati of this line, the word becomes Veeshalakshi (notation : SDPM- MGR-). Veeshalakshi doesn't make sense, so why not mould the sangati to shorten the Vi and elongate the shaalakshi? The simple reason is that no one gives this a thought.

Oth-thu akshara is another casualty in sahitya. Since Tamil script does not have the variations of "ka, kha, ga, gha" etc, the same soft sound is used for all. In *Brova bharama*, the popular Bahudari kriti, the "bhaarama" becomes "baarama", so the meaning "Am I a burden (bhaaram)" gets snarled. The phrase "Bhakti leni" becomes 'baktile-ni'. Sanskrit and Telugu (as well as Kannada) have oth-thu aksharas (unlike Tamil) so Tamilian singers need to be careful about getting the pronunciation right. Matu and dhatu are both equally important in our music, so when

we get one right, why not take care to get the other right too?

A friend of mine calls this callousness towards sahyam as the "dinapu" syndrome. The curious phrase comes from the Thyagaraja kriti *Manasa Sri Ramachandrani* in Ishamanohari raga. The anupallavi is "Munu puttanu puttina" but gets sung as "Munupu danupu dinapu..." which makes nonsense of the lyrical meaning. Because 'ta' and 'da' are written using the same alphabet (ta) in Tamil, the distinction between ta and da is lost in rendering, with absurd consequences to the discerning listener. The first time he heard this 'danupu dinapu' rendition by a leading vocalist, he recalls, he rolled with uncontrolled laughter but later, on closer monitoring of sahyam pronunciations in concerts, was aghast at the amount of padach-chhedam and mutilation that goes on unchecked, even among leading artistes.

Why does this happen? One reason perhaps is that as audiences we focus on the melody more than the words and let mutilations pass. Another reason is that audiences too do not know Telugu or Kannada (or Sanskrit) and so are unaware of the distortions served up to them. The one artiste, who always made sure she got the phrasings and pronunciation right, was M.S. Subbulakshmi. My teacher Musiri Subramanya Iyer gave importance to Telugu phrasings especially during niraval.

Mentioning niraval reminds me of another point - I was taught by my teachers at the Central College of Karnatic Music, Chennai, that niraval should only be done to appropriate lines of the kriti - appropriate not merely in terms of melody but also in terms of the meaning of the lyrics. It is not done, to take up for niraval a half-sentence just because it fits into one tala cycle. Also, niraval was to be done only after presenting the full kriti and then returning to the phrase chosen for niraval. Many performers present niraval and kalpana swaram in the middle and then go on to complete the kriti. Sometimes even a short tani follows the swaram, before the kriti is picked up again and finished. This is just not done. These are guidelines that text books do not mention. One may learn the sahyam and the tune from an audiotape or notation, or both, but these kinds of unwritten 'codes' of do's and don'ts need a teacher to guide and point out.

One of my teachers used to say that mutilation of any kind - of the raga, or sahyam amounts to murder. Ponder over that statement the next time you sing something.

ARANGETRAM

Arangetram of five students, Bhagyalakshmi, Chaitali Arora, Heramb Ranade, Janhvi Gurav and Supriya Kamble, of the first batch of Bharatanatyam students, who have passed the seven year certificate course of the Shanmukhananda Bharatiya Sangeeta Vidyalaya this year, was held on 15th October 2011.

Music Information Technology (MIT): SASTRA's Initiative - A Gateway To New Opportunities

Dr. S. A. Veerapandian

The convergence of music and computing technologies

The convergence of music and computing technologies has increased the creative possibilities and potential for innovative and diverse new music and media. MIT, the result of the convergence, is related to all kinds of development and applications of Digital Music based on the science of music.

The areas of business and employment scope in MIT are music-programming languages, music application software development for music composing, editing, development of music education aids and application packages, music-related entertainment and advertising industry, multimedia products, internet radio/TV station, and ring tones.

A Google search will lead to innumerable products both in music education & entertainment, mainly based on western music. Such products based on Indian music await a virgin market.

The success story of India in Information Technology (IT) is yet to be emulated with respect to MIT, due to lack of courses in MIT in recognized higher education institutions including IITs and NITs, Universities, etc.

A brief review of the support for MIT in western countries

A brief review of the support extended to MIT in western countries will help to identify the steps for India to move forward.

25 Universities and Colleges in USA offer Postgraduate/Graduate Music Technology / Production courses - <http://www.uniguru.com/studyabroad/postgraduate/us-usa-university-courses/us-usa-music-technology-production-courses/i/lk./all211/1/programs.html>

125 colleges run Undergraduate music technology courses in UK - http://www.hotcourses.com/uk-courses/Music-Technology-degree-courses/hc2_browse.pg_loc_tree/16180339/220704/p_type_id/2/p_bcat_id/569/page.htm

5 Universities and Colleges in USA offer Doctoral degree - PhD in Music Technology / Production - <http://www.uniguru.com/studyabroad/phd/us-usa-university-courses/us-usa-music-technology-production-courses/i/lk./all211/1/programs.html>

MIT in India - SASTRA University's Initiative

Following its lead in Bio-Technology, Nano-Technology & inter-disciplinary research, SASTRA University, Thanjavur, has offered MIT as one of the open electives to B.Tech students from the current academic year with encouraging response. Starting from the basics of Musical Acoustics, the syllabus covers the basis of Indian Raga system, Digital Music including MIDI, Music Programming Languages and Applications. The syllabus was framed by Dr.S.A.Veerapandian, who devised the syllabus for 'Physics of Music' & 'Computer Music' for the University of Madras, as a former member of the Board of Studies of Music.

Also SASTRA University has initiated MIT-related research in 'Microsound' and 'Computational Linguistics' with a research team headed by Dr.S.A.Veerapandian in the School of Computing. Former IGCAR senior scientist Dr.P.Swaminathan, as Dean of the School of Computing had included MIT as one of the research domains and the research is progressing under his direct supervision.

Former President Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam, during his recent visit to the SASTRA University campus for the XXV convocation, praised the Vice-Chancellor Professor R. Sethuraman's visionary role in SASTRA University pioneering inter-disciplinary research in emerging fields.

The success story of India in MIT has started in SASTRA University with promising results in the near future.

Music Information Technology FAQ

1. What is MIT?

Vocal music and music from acoustic instruments like violin, veena, guitar etc are known as analogue music. Music produced by synthesizers over media like computer, Internet, CD, MP3 gadgets, etc is known as digital music. Music Information Technology (MIT) is related to all kinds of development and applications of Digital Music based on the science of music.

2. What is Digital Music?

Music produced by acoustic instruments and music heard by ears are called Analogue Music. Analogue Music becomes Digital Music through A/D converter. Also music produced by synthesizers is Digital Music.

3. What is Synthetic Music?

Music can be produced electronically without using actual music instruments or human voice. Such a music that is produced by electronic devices or computers is synthetic music.

4. What is Acoustic Music?

Music produced by human voice and acoustic music instruments is called Acoustic Music.

5. How can Computer Music be Acoustic Music?

Acoustic Music becomes digital when recorded by a digital device. A computer may be used to remove the defects and improve its final product through editing without introducing any additional synthetic music. Such a music output processed by a computer will still be Acoustic Music.

6. Can music be partly acoustic and partly synthetic?

Yes. Computer can add synthetic music to acoustic music and the final product may be partly acoustic and partly synthetic. Most modern music belongs to this category.

7. What is Science of Music?


For a sound to become music, it must have pitch, duration, loudness and timbre. A study of all these aspects of music, applying the relevant principles and laws of Acoustics is known as the science of music.

8. What are the areas of business and employment scope in MIT?

The areas of business and employment scope in MIT are music-programming languages, music application software development for music composing, editing, development of music education aids and application packages, music-related entertainment and advertising industry, multimedia products, internet radio/TV station, and ring tones.

9. What are the advantages for the Engineering students opting for MIT as one of the subjects?

At present all kinds of jobs involving music software development and applications related to music & entertainment industry are handled by self-trained persons. B.Tech graduates who successfully complete MIT will have a career value addition as well as opportunity for higher studies & research in the emerging new field of 'Microsound' and potentially developing field of 'Computational Linguistics'



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DANCE MATTERS

A. Seshan

The National Centre for the Performing Arts, Mumbai, organised an afternoon session of discussion on 26th August 2011 at the Little Theatre on the theme "Dance Matters - Content, Context and Core of Indian Dance Today". Leela Samson, Devina Dutt, Ranjana Dave, Daksha Mashruwala and Astad Deboo were the panellists. Amrita Lahiri, who moderated the session, said that the programme was open-ended and not structured so that the panellists and the members of the audience could have a freewheeling discussion on all aspects of Indian classical dances.

In her keynote address Samson emphasised the wide-ranging scope for methodology or pedagogy for teaching classical dances that could cover sculptures, Vedic studies, languages and many other areas. She asked whether it is really possible to cover all of them. She gave examples of fields included in the training programmes of Kalakshetra of which she is the Director. The institution provides instruction on a wide range of subjects that would be relevant to one who wants to become either a dancer or a teacher. She recommended a post-graduate course for becoming a performer and another for teaching. Arts management needs attention as not everyone in the field may become a performing artiste. She recalled the huge agenda that the Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA), of which she is the Chairperson, set before itself when it was inaugurated. To illustrate, even the craft of instrument-making fell within its scope for providing encouragement. The problem is one of sustaining the activities year after year given the limitations in manpower and management. Building up archives, another responsibility of SNA, is very essential for preserving the heritage of the country but it is a huge and challenging job. She said that there are many rasikas who have personal archival materials of performances which they may not like to part with. She gave the example of one lover of Carnatic music who used to record the riyaz (practice) of the late maestro M.D.Ramanathan every evening in his house after he returned from teaching at Kalakshetra. It is a mine of materials including rarely-heard kritis and ragas. How can one get access to such materials for passing on to posterity? After the collection of the material, whether it relates to music or dance, it needs to be edited; this requires the collaboration of the concerned artistes and their willingness to invest time and effort in the project.

The other panellists made the following points. 'Creativity' can be interpreted in different ways in different art forms. The physical expression of rasas can differ from artiste to artiste. Kelucharan Mohapatra's expression of rasa provided an out-of-the-ordinary experience to the viewers. There is a common bond binding all artistes in their art. If there is any divisiveness or discrimination between arts it is among the viewers. There is, however, a certain amount of divide between dancers and critics. Dance education is necessary for dance writing. Performing arts should appeal to the masses. The classical dances are no longer confined to the temples as in the distant past. The temple provided a certain ambience. The use of technology in performances is essential to make sure that we are not left behind in making progress. A revolving stage is one such example. But the basic question is whether we can recreate the ambience of the temple despite all the props that technology and choreography may provide. Collaboration of artistes belonging to different genres will be to the benefit of all. One panellist regretted the fact that Mumbai is not very responsive to the idiom of modern dance, which has its own grammar. In the absence of patronage, there is a lack of platforms available for its presentation. Innovative themes involving street children, hearing-impaired and Manipur drummers have been presented using the medium of modern dance.

There was a lively discussion with many in the audience participating. Due to the limitation of space only a few points are covered here. This writer raised the question of the declining status of Margam (the Alarippu to Tillana format) in Bharatanatyam programmes. He said that, after spending 7 to 10 years learning all the adavus, hastamudras and other technical elements of Natya Shastra and performing the arangetram, the student takes to dance dramas like "9/11" where there is more walking than dancing. Is it not a waste of all the training? While he welcomed innovations in arts he felt that we should not give up the heritage that we have inherited. One panellist referred to the two worlds of dance - one on the stage and the other in films and they have no relationship to each other. There is no dialogue between these two sections of the artistic community. This was not so in the past when classical dances were part of movies choreographed by eminent nattuvanars. Academic training in some universities is faulty but the student has to learn the wrong lessons and answer questions accordingly to pass the examination. There is a need to stick to the original versions of lyrics and no attempt should be made to tamper with them. An example was given of a singer correcting a javali on grounds of grammar and elegance of the language. The artiste could not object as she was not familiar with the language. When an expert on the language was brought in he explained that the lyric was written long back when certain expressions, though seemingly colloquial now, were common and well-understood. In such instances it is not proper to correct them since corrections would result in distortions in meanings. There should be good collaboration among all the persons connected with the art forms in one way or the other. There was an observation that the financial support for arranging a festival was zero. Young dancers did not get a sizeable audience. The NCPA, Shanmukhananda Sabha and the Chembur Fine Arts, each has its own niche audience and there should be collaboration among them in sponsoring concerts. Another area already touched upon earlier was the setting up of archives. Samson was happy to announce the ongoing collaboration between Kalakshetra and the Music Academy in exchanging archival materials with the Indian Institute of Technology extending technical help in digitisation. This writer pointed out the large archives in Shanmukhananda which however has only a few users.

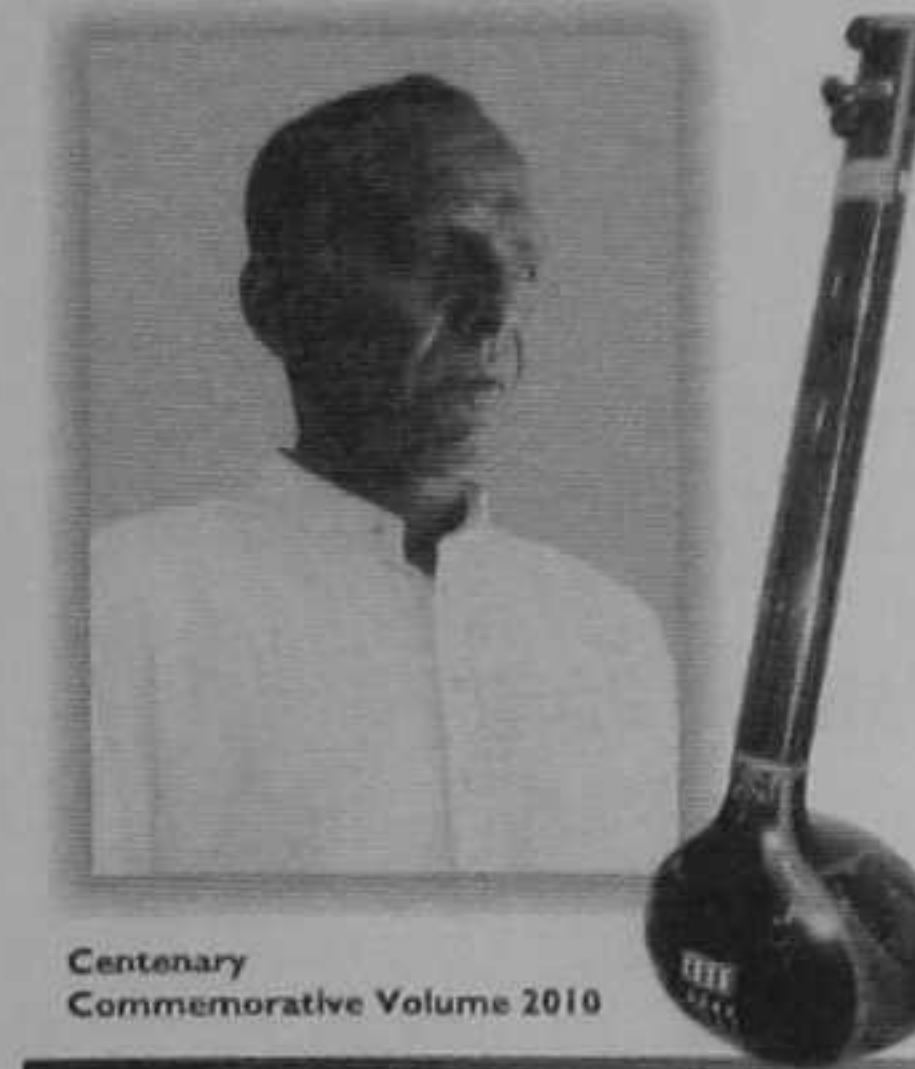
The discussion was lively with occasional exchanges of repartee between the panellists and the audience that promoted bonhomie. It was thoughtful of the NCPA to have arranged an afternoon discussion (3 PM to 5 PM) and one looks forward to more such occasions. Despite the rains, the auditorium with a capacity for 100 persons was full, some sitting on the steps of the aisles. The event was rounded off with an unexpected bonus of a high tea.

Book Review

by P. P. Ramachandran

Pallavur K. Mani Iyer

THE REVELLING NAADOPASAKA



Centenary
Commemorative Volume 2010

Compiled, Edited & Published by V. VAMANAN

Pallavur K. Mani Iyer - *The Revelling Nadopasaka*, edited and published by V. Vamanan, pages 256, Rs 300

The book under review is an affectionate tribute to a Guru by a loving disciple. Pallavur Mani Iyer was born on 16th September 1910. He passed away on 20th January 1987 and elected to depart from this earth on the Aradhana Day of Thyagaraja Swami, merging with the One he held in great reverence.

His father Shri Krishna Bhagavatar was a famous vocalist and played the violin. Mani Iyer joined the Annamalai College of Music at Chidambaram and was the star disciple of a forbiddingly impressive trinity - Shri T.S.Sabesha Iyer, Shri K. Ponniah Pillai and Shri Tiger Varadachariar. He was forced to stop singing for a long period due to an unfortunate loss of voice. After 41 days of devoted prayers in Guruvayoor temple he regained his voice and became a great devotee of Guruvayoorappan. During this traumatic period he was accepted as a shishya by Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar who, all of us will recall, went through an identical painful experience. Mani Iyer was soon transformed into a favourite shishya of Chembai, who declared the young student to be "...a great scholar having profound knowledge of music". Mani Iyer began his career as a music teacher in Raja's School in Kollengode. He migrated to Bombay and started the "Carnatic Music Institute" in Vile Parle. Two leading composers from Palghat, Kozhinjarapalli Narayana Shastri and Devesanna of Chittor, entrusted the work of tuning their compositions and notating them to Mani Iyer.

From 1953 he started composing his own kritis, commencing with *Kannanai Kaanenadi Sakhi*. His kritis are modelled on those of Thyagaraja with sangatis that impart verve to the raga. Mani Iyer's compositions, 108 in number, Ashtotthara Geetamalika Samarpanam is an eloquent proof of his composing acumen and notating finesse, leaving students with little doubt as to their practical construction, as pointed out by Sulochana Rajendran in her scholarly foreword. Uttama vaggeyakara that Pallavur Mani Iyer was, he left nothing to chance, not even 'copyright'. Every song bears his signature, and this is enough authentication of his creations. His compositions are in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil with simple words so as to not detract from the melody.

Mani Iyer was a true Nadopasaka, a great teacher and composer in constant pursuit of excellence, but nevertheless an embodiment of simplicity. As brought out vividly by his student Vamanan, he was a role model, worthy of emulation.

The volume is a labour of love and a rich tribute by an eminent student to his inspiring teacher. It is divided into four parts. Part I is dedicated to Mani Iyer's life and teaching. There are two articles here. One is by Vamanan and the other by Mani Iyer's son, Shri P.S.Shankar. Both furnish a wealth of information on the musician not readily available otherwise. Part II contains a selection of sixteen songs in Tamil, Devanagari and English script with meanings and provides details of ragas and talas. Admirable portraits of deities make this part aesthetically beautiful.

The material in Part III is rare and unusual. Given here are the great musicologist's handwritten notations in Devanagari of a semi-Margam, comprising two varnams, seven kritis and one tillana.

Part IV is an index of the vidwan's compositions and their classification by deity and tala. Also provided is a list of prasiddha and apoorva ragas used, tracing the Master's work as a whole. The lyrics, of a song composed by Smt. Kamala Krishnamurthy in Veenavadini raga in praise of Pallavur Mani Iyer on the occasion of his 3rd Aradhana celebrations in the year 1990 is also given in this part.

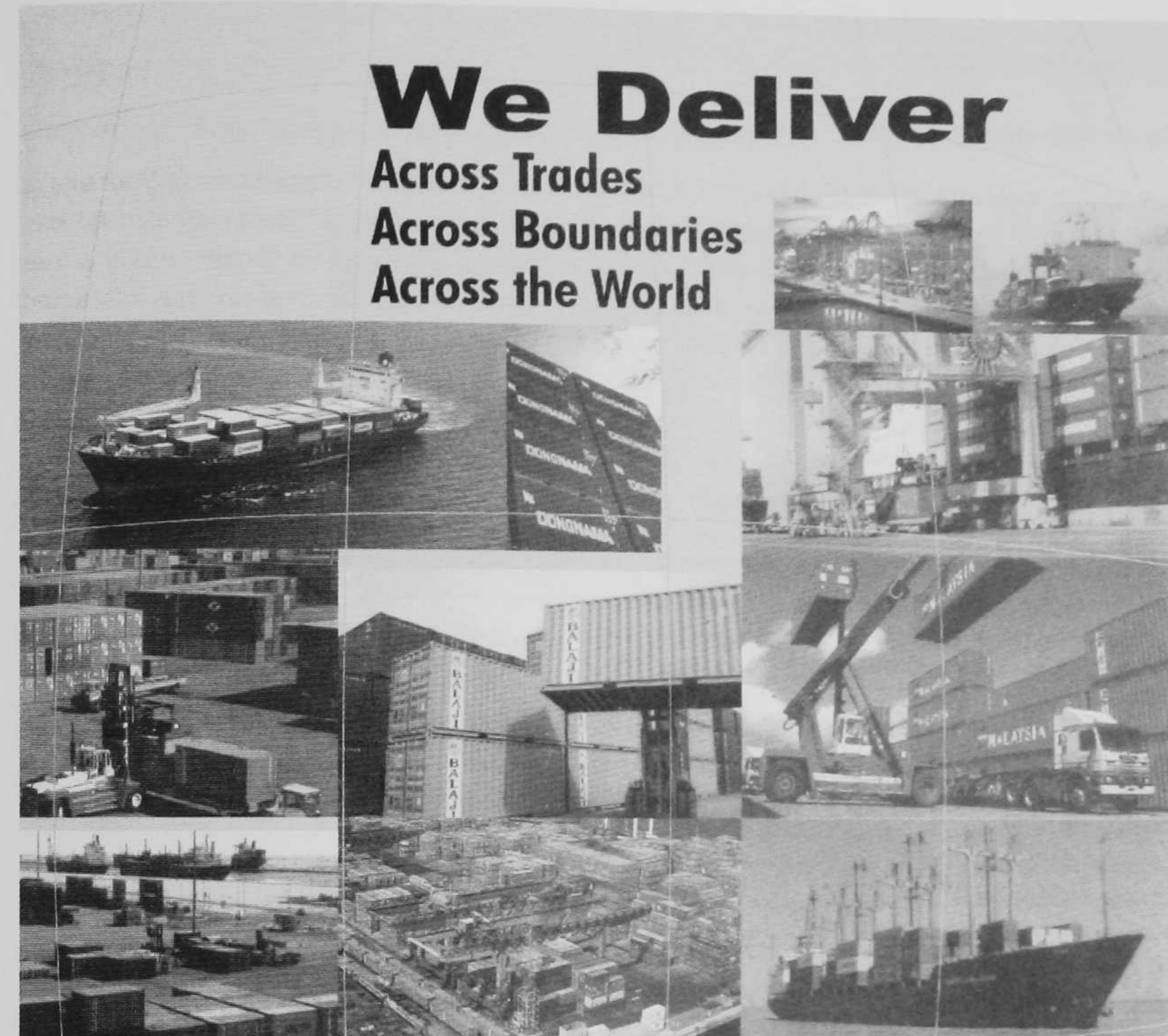
This publication is a goldmine for all exponents of Carnatic Music as also students.

ANNUAL MUSIC-DANCE-DRAMA FESTIVAL - NOVEMBER 2011

The sabha's annual festival includes a musical mono-act by Shekhar Sen, light music by S.P. Balasubramaniam, a concert of Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan, dance dramas by the Dhananjayans, jugalbandi by Rafique Khan (sitar) and Ronu Majumdar (flute) and Tamil plays by the United Visuals troupe.

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Readerspeak

Many Splendoured Genius

I read with great absorption the highly scholarly article on Hindustani Compositions by Maharaja Swati Tirunal by Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan in the April-June issue of "Shanmukha". She has done tremendous research and deep study of the works of this royal composer who is a true integrator of Indian music. As a Trivandrum resident for long and a music lover who has interacted with some of the members of the Swati Tirunal Kritis Publication Committee which included my cousin the late Dr. Venkitasubrahmaniam Iyer, I appreciate the insightful, informative essay by Dr. Sakuntala Narasimhan, who has mastery of both Carnatic and Hindustani music, is a top performer in both systems, and is an ex-senior assistant editor of the Times group publication "Femina" too.

My daughter Meera Nathan, a talented teacher and national level artiste, used to sing the Hindustani compositions of Swati Tirunal at concerts in North India. The listeners were taken aback at the brilliance and versatility of the South Indian composer who bridged the music of the North and the South. Music institutes like Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya can do much to popularise the Hindustani compositions of Swati Tirunal, who has left a rich musical legacy which spreads the spirit of national integration.

N. Hariharan

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Sabha Roundup

Concert of Maharajapuram Ramachandran 9th July 2011

Nalini Dinesh



Shri Maharajapuram Ramachandran giving away the music competition prizes

Prizes for the annual music competition conducted by the sabha in February 2011 were given away by senior vocalist Maharajapuram Shri Ramachandran. During this year there were 73 prize winners out of 194 eligible entries for 43 endowments, both from Carnatic & Hindustani streams (including vocal & Instrumental). Out of 73 prize-winners, 13 participants bagged more than one prize. There were 6 students of the Vidyalaya who won prizes in the competitions. Bharatanatyam competition was continued for the 2nd year in succession and the response was quite good. There were 8 prize winners out of 50 eligible entries. 5 prizes have been awarded in the junior group and 3 prizes in the senior group. 2 students of the Vidyalaya participated in the Bharatanatyam competition. This year medals were given to prize winners in place of audio CDs. 6 prize winners bagged more than one prize with prize money amounting to more than Rs.2,000/-. In such cases, the total prize money was put together and a silver lamp for the respective amount was presented to each of the six winners. Vimarshini Jairam bagged 14 prizes - eight 1st prizes, five 2nd prizes and best vocalist prize in the senior group.

The function was followed by Shri Maharajapuram Ramachandran's concert accompanied by M.R. Gopinath on the violin and Mannargudi Eashwaran on the mridangam.



*Maharajapuram Ramachandran (vocal), M.R. Gopinath (violin),
Mannargudi Eashwaran (mridangam)*

The concert began with Begada varnam embellished with kalpana swaras. *Shree Shivatraya Mahaganapatim*, a composition by Swarnavenkatesha Dikshitar was sung next with chittaswaram and kalpana swaras followed by *Pariyachagama* in Vanaspati also with kalpana swaras. A very good Arabhi alapana both by vocalist and violinist with the Thyagaraja kriti *Tsalakallaladu* and a leisurely, detailed and nuanced Varaali alapana before an excellent rendition of Shyama Shastri's *Kamakshi* were the highlights of the concert. *Swami Mayuragiri vadivela*, a Kavi Kunjara Bharati composition in Nagaswaravali was followed by Kalyani alapana and *Enduku nee manasu* with neraval and kalpana swaras at "Thyagaraja hridaya". A seasoned and mellow tani avartanam followed by the veteran Shri Mannargudi Eashwaran.

Palghat Mani Iyer Centenary Celebration 14th August 2011

Jyothi Mohan

This is the centenary year of Padmabhushan, Sangeetha Kalanidhi, Isai Peraringyar Palghat T.S. Mani Iyer. The Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha celebrated this by honouring his family as well as senior disciple Shri Kamalakar Rao, at a function held at the Sri Shanmukhananda Chandrasekarendra Saraswati Auditorium. This was followed by a vocal concert by the renowned Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy.

The evening began with an audio-visual treat of Alathur Srinivasa Iyer's melodious Todi accompanied on the violin by Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman and mridangam by Shri Palghat Mani Iyer. This was followed by a brilliant tani avartanam by Shri Palghat Mani Iyer.

After Vedic chanting and invocation by students of the sangeeta vidyalaya, Shri V. Shankar, President of the Sabha spoke in glowing terms of the life and achievements of the legendary Shri Palghat Mani Iyer. Tracing his early training and debut, he spoke about Shri Mani Iyer's contribution to elevating the status of the mridangam, giving it pride of place among the percussion instruments. He was the first percussionist to preside over the Music Academy Conference and win the coveted title of Sangeetha Kalanidhi. He was the most sought-after mridangist of his time. However, he declined to play before a microphone and when mike-less concerts became the exception, he withdrew from the scene totally and ceased to perform. His untimely end came soon after, shocking all his students and ardent followers. He has left behind several illustrious disciples and the Sabha honoured senior disciple Kamalakar Rao. Shri V. Shankar also expressed the Sabha's desire to host the Centenary Celebration of Dr. Pinakapani, Guru of Sri Nedunuri in the year 2012. He hoped that after the celebration at Kurnool, Nedunurigar would accompany his Guru to Mumbai for the celebration. Shri Shankar also lamented the government's apathy towards bestowing the highest honours upon senior musicians.



V. Kamalakar Rao being presented a golden mridangam By Sabha Vice President Dr. V. Rangaraj

The family members were felicitated by the President and other committee members. Replying to the felicitations, his son Sri Thyagarajan thanked the Sabha for celebrating Shri Mani Iyer's Centenary in such a befitting manner and also for the hospitality showered on the family. He mentioned a few interesting anecdotes about his father. Shri Kamalakar Rao thanked the Sabha and expressed his deep gratitude to his mentor. He advised young percussionists to listen to old masters to imbibe the beauty of technique as well as melody. He reminded them that the mridangam should be played with firmness and finesse, never to hit it hard, but to coax melody out of it.

Speaking about the greatness of Shri Mani Iyer, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Sri Nedunuri Krishnamurthy expressed his good fortune of being accompanied by the great vidwan. He recollected that his first concert with Shri Mani Iyer was at the wedding of Shri Kamalakar Rao! He described Mani Iyer as a mridangist with very sharp intelligence, amazing anticipation and the ability to accompany a musician with melodious lightning-swift strokes. He also thanked the Sabha for planning the Centenary Celebration of his Guru Dr. Pinakapani and assured all cooperation towards the happy event.



(from l to r) Kamalakar Rao (mridangam), Nedunuri Krishnamurthy (vocal), Vinay Sharva (vocal support), K.V. Krishna (violin)

Shri Nedunuri began his concert with *Vallabha nayakasya*, the composition in Begada by Muthuswami Dikshitar. The scholarly swara prasthara flowed effortlessly delighting the audience. *Janaki ramana* in Shuddha Seemantini was sung with great dignity. Kalyani was taken up for elaboration and the typical long phrases with delicate gamakas drew appreciation from the connoisseurs. Thyagaraja's *Nammi Vachhina* in Rupaka thalam was chosen keeping in mind the duration of the concert. Shriranjani was elaborate with beautiful sangatis and the intricate ragam development was followed by *Parvatha Rajakumari*. The neraval and swaram were rich in rhythmic combinations revealing his mastery. Kamalakar Rao's soft, yet effective accompaniment on the mridangam and the tani that followed were a rhythmic treat, replete with delicate touches of the Mani Iyer school. This was followed by *Narayana nalinayatha lochana* in Sama set to Adi tala, a Sanskrit composition of Papanasam Sivan with the raga mudra. K.V. Krishna's violin accompaniment was melodious. Delicate nuances marked his raga development. Young Vinay Sharva provided good vocal support to his guru. A bhakti-laden *Vishweshwara darshan kar* in Sindhubhairavi of Swati Tirunal was followed by viruttams which brought to an end an evening of vintage music which lingered in our minds and hearts.

Members' Day 15th August 2011

Jyothi Mohan

Excitement, expectation and enthusiasm, marked the celebration of Members' Day-a day for members, by the members. On the morning of 15th August, the Chandrashekharendra Saraswati auditorium was abuzz with anticipation. Invoking Lord Ganesha in a bhajan in raga Bhoop, Rupa Karthik set the tone for the morning's programme.



Kanakavalli Santhanam (vocal), Rajan Singh (tabla), Jagdish Deulkar (harmonium), Tejasvi (violin)

The music segment started with the clear ringing voice of Kanakavalli Santhanam whose Marathi abhang *Amrutahuni god* was just that-sweeter than nectar. V. Ramakrishnan's dulcet voice did full justice to the devotional number *Om Namah Shivaya*, emulating his *maanasika* Guru, Pithukuli Murugadas. Padmini Vijayaraghavan, one of the earliest members of the sabha has been coming forward with great enthusiasm to participate in the Members' Day programme. She sang a ragamalika composition of Lalita Dasar extolling Lord Muruga. The oldest performer, Shri V.S.Nathan entertained the audience with a Hindi film song parody, choosing songs from as early as 1959!



Sujatha Sanjay Nair (Mohiniattam)

The classical dance section started with Sujatha Sanjay Nair's Mohiniattam. She presented excerpts from a varnam in Simhendramadhyamam extolling Lord Rama. Her depiction of Ravana, Rama's lifting of the bow and Shabari's love for Rama drew spontaneous applause from the

audience. Nupur Pai's lovely portrayal of the ever-mischievous Krishna in *Maadu Meikkum Kanne* and his clever responses to mother Yashoda's remonstrations, were enjoyed by members. Yashoda's vatsalyabhava was evident in Kala Srinivasan's *Krishna Nee Begane Baro*. Mayakalyani Srivatsan rounded off the dance segment with a lively tillana.

Vice President of the sabha, Santosh Rajan has been known for scripting, directing and acting in delightful plays year after year. This year, under her direction, the members' children highlighted the need to eschew fast foods and embrace a wholesome, home-cooked meal in the Tamil play, *Guess Who Is Coming to Dinner*. The children acted out their roles with ease and were highly appreciated by the audience. The participants were Ramnath, Anirudh, Mianka, Samyuta, Vaishnavi, Krithika, Sridevi, Pavithra and Shweta.



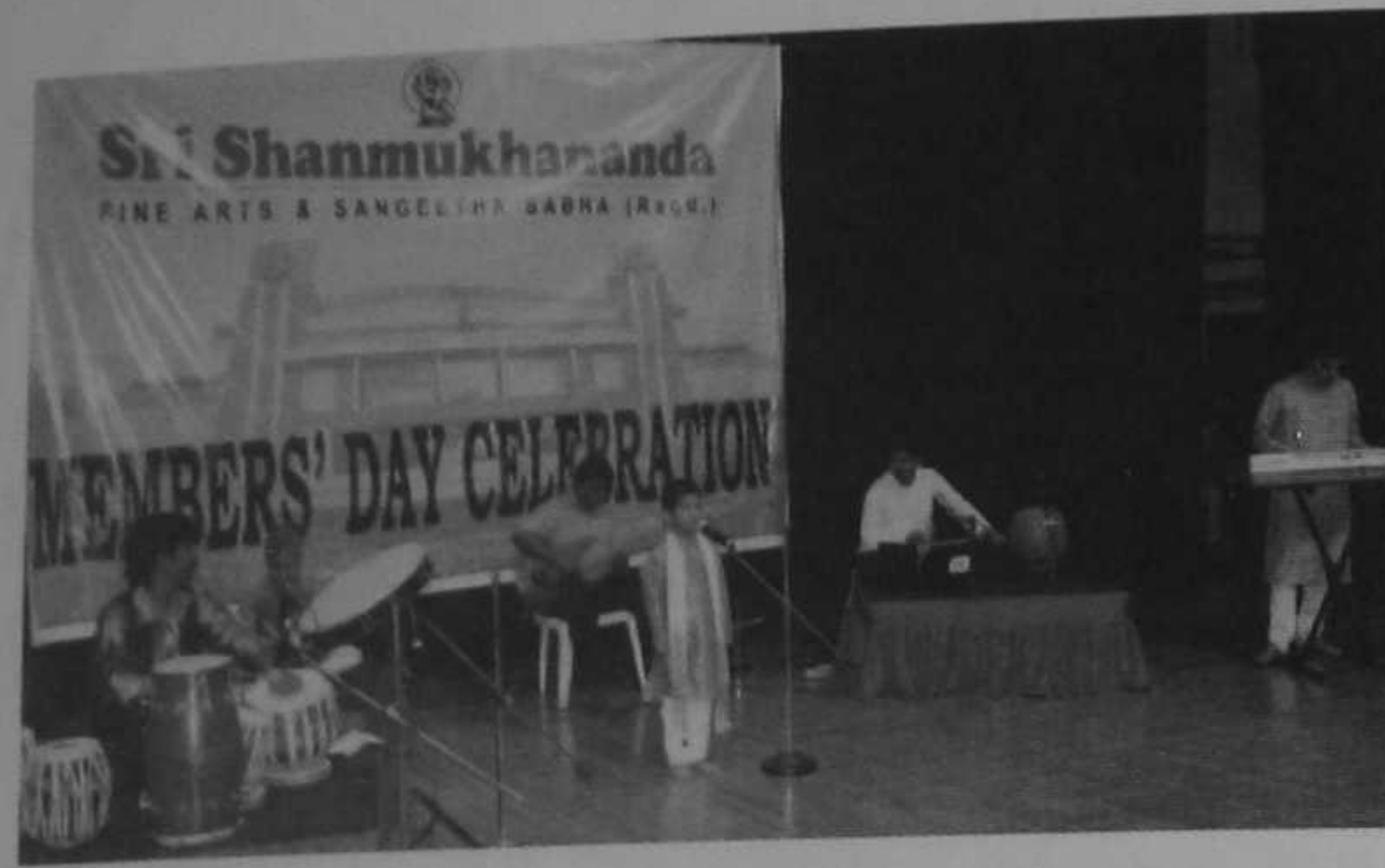
Ponnambalam and Subalakshmi-Mock Interview with a politician

The skit, *Vendumo Innum Oru Swatantiram* - a TV interview with a highly corrupt politician, written by Ponnambalam and enacted by Ponnambalam and Subalakshmi had the audience in splits!



Ganesh and Sangeetha singing a pop number

Ganesh Iyer's rocking pop numbers *Crazy Thing called Love* and *It's a Wonderful World* had the audience tapping their feet in enthusiastic accompaniment. The beautifully rendered duet *Thank You for the Music* by Sangeetha and Ganesh also went down very well with the members.



A.K. Deepak singing a Malayalam song

The youngest participant, little A.K. Deepak sang the popular Malayalam number *Chethi Mandaram Tulasi* with his melodious voice. Shanta Menon brought back old memories with the evergreen film song, *Chandan Sa Badan*. Rupa Karthik's Tamil film song *Kanda Naal Mudalaai* was appealing. R.Gopalakrishnan's rendering of the popular *Chand Sa Roshan Chehra* as a tribute to Shammi Kapoor who passed away recently, was well-appreciated. Pushpa Anantharaman's evocative *Aayiye Meherbaan* in Hindi and Praveena Gouthaman's *Unnai Ondru Ketpen, Jeene ki Raah* of Mukesh sung by Jayaram Atreya and Subramaniam and Hindi film numbers by Rajan Iyer were some of the offerings from film music genre. A guitar solo by Chidambaranathan and keyboard solo by Pranav Ganapathy were also presented. Pranav presented Keeravani through a Carnatic composition following it up with a Hungarian orchestra number. Prizes were distributed to the children and grandchildren of members for their outstanding achievements in examinations. Mention must be made of the lively compering by Jaya Meera, Sangeetha Rajan and Santosh Ranjan, as well as the support of the accompanists, Rajan Singh Thakur, Gopa Kumar, Sriram Rajan, Pranav Ganapathy and Jagdish Deulkar. Hon. Secy. Sri V.S.Amarnath Sury proposed the vote of thanks.



Children's group dance

The finale of the morning events was a dance choreographed by Santosh Rajan and performed by the same group which participated in the children's skit above, for the song *Vande Mataram*. The children wearing a tricolour costume, waving the national flag and Ashoka chakra made a variety of formations to the tune.

Concert of Jyotsna Krishnamurthy 27th August 2011

Nalini Dinesh



Jyotsna Krishnamurthy (vocal), R. Raghu (violin), Arjun Ganesh (mridangam)

This talent promotion concert by Jyotsna, a disciple of Smt Seetha Rajan, showed a lot of maturity. Her rendition was full-throated and neat with good manodharma. Commencing with Todi varnam *Eranapai* and a flash of Hamsadhvani reminiscent of her guru, followed by *Gam Ganapate*, Jyotsna gave an excellent rendition of *Kaa vaa vaa* and Shriranjani alapana before *Gajavadana* with kalpana swaras. A crisp and lively Thyagaraja kriti in Sindhuramakriya *Sudha Madhurya Bhashana* was followed by an Annamacharya kriti *Paluvicharamulena* in Shanmukhapriya ragam prefaced by an alapana. Neraval and kalpana swaras were at "Melato Shree Venkatesha" at three counts from samam. This eduppu being a challenge for slow speed swaras, she nevertheless did a good job of it albeit only for two avartanas. The small avartana swaras were brisk. Shankarabharanam alapana followed by *Shankaracharyam* with neraval and swaram at "Parama gnana lata" was the main item. The post-tani items were a soulful *Ninna ne aatana paduva*, Purandaradasar kriti in Hamsanandi and tillana in Khamas. Jyotsna was accompanied by Raghu on the violin and Arjun Ganesh on the mridangam who put up an impressive show.

Concert of Abhishek Raghuram 10th September 2011

Nalini Dinesh



Abhishek Raghuram (vocal), Mysore Srikanth (violin), Sridhar Parthasarathy (mridangam)

Abhishek's concert had a flying start with Kanada varnam *Nera Nammiti* and a Naattai kriti of Dr. Balamuralikrishna *Ganasudha Rasa* which had beautiful and unusual lyrics that contained a musician's affirmation of his commitment to the art. Kalpana swaras were sung at *Sama gana* which was at an interesting eduppu: half count from 2nd drutam. An M.D. Ramanathan kriti *Thyagaraja gurum aashraye* in Kedaram followed. Abhishek even did the Kedaram alapana MDR

style! And this, after rendering Balamurali's kriti and swaras for the kriti in Balamurali's style itself! The Pantuvarali alapana that followed was rather disappointing after such a great start. With too many varjyams and flat phrases, it needed constant reiterations of GDPMGRG,,MP and NSRS,RN to bring the mood back to Pantuvarali. He sang a Tiruvarutpa *Panniru Kanmalar* by Ramalinga Adigalar set to tune brightly by guru P.S. Narayanaswamy. There was a lively chittaswaram as in both the preceding songs and this one had interesting daatu prayogas. Kalpana swaras for pallavi and a kuraippu at gandharam were outstanding. Again Yadukulakambhoji bhava did not come through in full in Abhishek's alapana and the rendition of *Divakara Tanujam* was also not very satisfactory. A GNB kriti in Simhendramadhyamam *Porumai izhanden* was followed by RTP in Nattakuranji. The alapana had excellent phrases and the pallavi was short and sweet *Kanna vaa mani vanna vaa;;;karunai kattave manamirangi* in Adi talam 2 kalai with ragamalika swaras. Mysore Srikanth's violin accompaniment was classy and Sridhar Parthasarathy provided able support on the mridangam.

Best Teacher Award 16th Sept 2010

Nalini Dinesh

The 9th Shri Shanmukhananda Bharat Ratna Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi Sangeetha Pracharya Award was bestowed on guru Shri P.S. Narayanaswamy. The Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi award, as the sabha president Shri V. Shankar noted in his address, was instituted to recognize the services of musicians who have transcended the lure of performing and have dedicated their lives to the cause of teaching their art. Hence it was but appropriate that the latest edition of this award, which has been titled Sangeetha Pracharya award, to signify its pan-Indian nature as against the previous editions that were focused on Mumbai gurus alone, is bestowed on a musician who has served the cause of Carnatic music for over six decades - and how! Shri PSN's students include the best and brightest of stars twinkling in the Carnatic music firmament today - Unnikrishnan, Nisha Rajagopalan, Akkarai Subbulakshmi, Bharat Sunder ... is a representative list. The hallmark of a guru is the extent to which he has preserved and nurtured the treasure that he has received from his gurus and seniors and how well he has been able to pass it on to his students in turn. Shri PSN has received his musical treasure from stalwarts like Mudicondan Venkatrama Iyer and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer.

Hailing from a family of professionals, Shri PSN started his musical training under nagaswara vidwan Tiruppambaram Somasundaram Pillai. He started performing onstage from the age of 15. He was a faithful shadow in his guru Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer's long performing career whom he reveres so much that he attributes his nickname Pitchai to the "musical pitchai (alms)" received from him.



Shri P.S. Narayanaswami receiving the golden lamp from Shri V. Shankar (Sabha President)

In Shri PSN's response to the award bestowed on him, which was marked by humour and self-effacing candour, he recalled his close association with Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi and her family and the time they had both spent learning from Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer. He related an incident which illustrates the queenly status which M.S. enjoyed in the field of music; when M.S. played her newly-released melaragamalika album to the Kanchi periyava and sought his blessings, the great seer said that her music would last as long as the sun and the moon.

Known to often remark to his students that he was only sharing the little that he knew, Shri PSN accepted the award with great humility remarking that at the age of 77 he was being thrust with the additional responsibility of living up to the award and all that it stood for, since he felt that his achievement so far was not nearly as great as what the citation made it out to be!



(from l to r) R. Raghul, Aishwarya Vidya, R. Sankaranarayanan

After felicitations from representatives of sister organizations of the sabha, there was a vocal concert of Aishwarya Vidya Raghunath, a disciple of Shri PSN, accompanied by R. Raghul on the violin and R. Sankaranarayanan on the mridangam. In the concerts held during the Best Teacher award function, the musicians are requested to include compositions made famous by Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi and accordingly Aishwarya commenced her recital with *Shriman Narayana* and followed it up with a racy *Ikanaina* in Pushpalatika ragam with neraval and kalpanaswaras at "akalanka neeve..". A Pantuvarali alapana with all the classical pidis intact prefaced *Naradamuni vedalina*, with neraval at "Narayananama..". An excellent Kambhoji alapana and *O Rangashayee* rendered with good gamakas and effective modulation with neraval and kalpana swaras at "Bhooloka Vaikuntham Idiyani" was the mainstay of the recital. Why do musicians insist on singing this line as as "Vaikunta Midi"? And then go on to emphasize the "Midi" in their neraval too! *Brahma kadigina padamu*, *Giridhara Gopala* and *Broohi Mukundeti* were a bright ending to a good concert.

Happenings At The Vidyalaya

Nalini Dinesh

**PAPANASAM SIVAN, OOTHUKAADU VENKATASUBBIER & GOPALAKRISHNA BHARATI
DAY 16th July 2011**

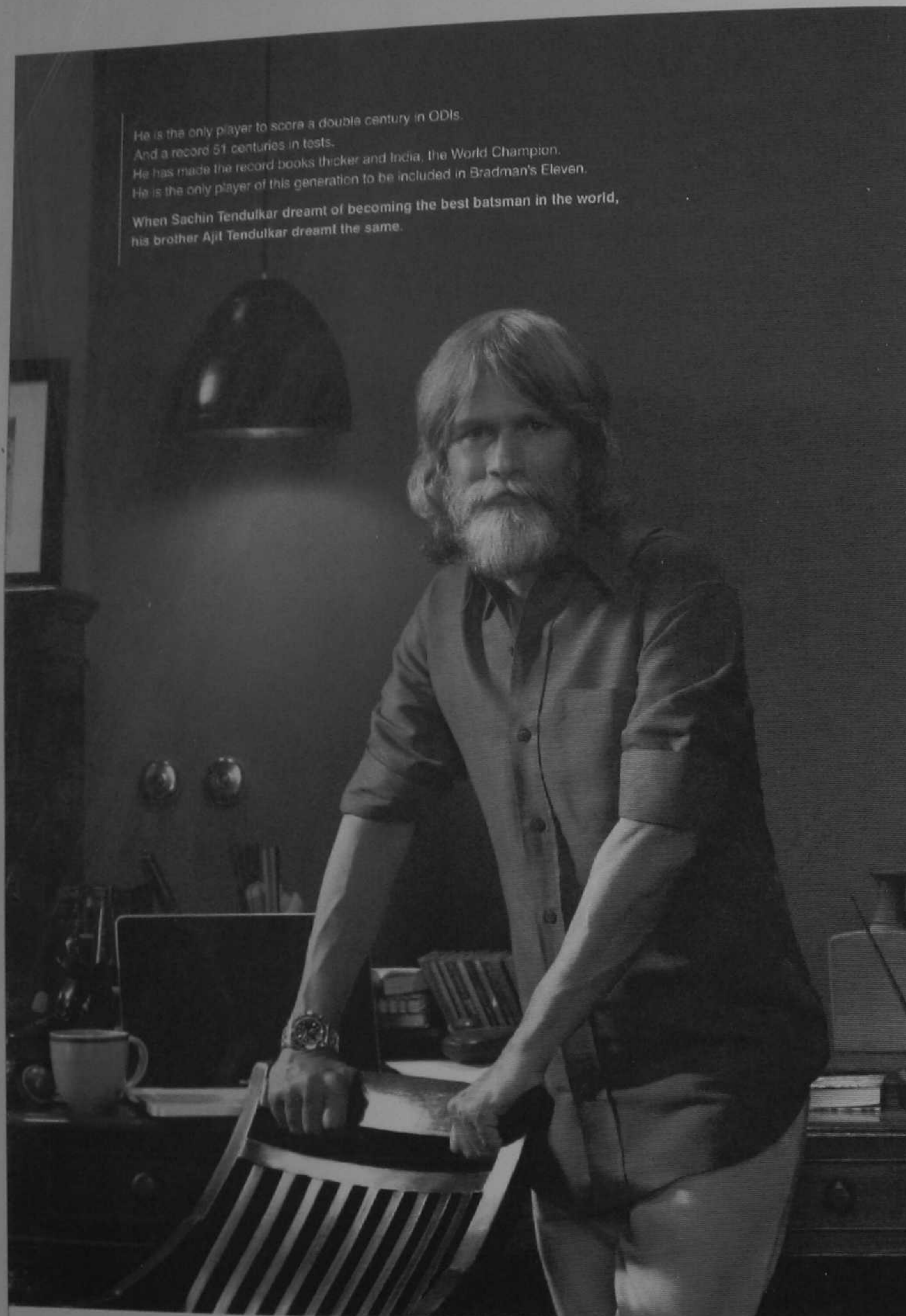
(from l to r) S. Gopakumar (mridangam), Anupama Devarajan (vocal),
Yogesh Padmanabhan (violin)

Anupama Devarajan's recital had full-throated renditions and clear enunciation of sahitya. After a spoken introduction of Papanasam Sivan, she rendered *Ganapatiye* a rare Sivan kriti in Kharaharapriya followed by *Karunanidhiye Taaye* in Bowli. Gopalakrishna Bharati's Kalyanavasantam kriti *Deva Jagannatha* was followed by an introduction of Oothukadu Venkata Kavi and the many firsts to his credit, including introduction of the madhyama kala in kritis and composition of Navavarana kritis and Saptaratna kritis (even before Thyagaraja's pancharatna kritis). She rendered with a lot of bhava, his Athana kriti *Madhura Madhura*, prefaced with an alapana. Sivan's *Kanindarul Purindal* in Kalyani prefaced by an alapana was followed by Venkata Kavi's Navavarana kriti in Nadanamakriya *Bhajaswa Shri Tripurasundari* of the Sarvasha Paripooraka chakra.



(from l to r) S. Gopakumar (mridangam), Nithya Rajendran (vocal),
Yogesh Padmanabhan (violin)

Nithya Rajendran began with a short Hamsadhwani alapana for *Mooladhara Moorti*. *Varuvaro varam Taruvaro*, the Gopalakrishna Bharati kriti in Sama which followed, expounds the Advaita



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philosophy. *Alaipayude Kanna* was rendered very well. A bright *Latangi alapana* and a soulful rendition of Sivan's *Pirava varam taarum*, was followed by Gopalakrishna Bharati's *Yadukula Kambhoji* composition *Innamum oru taram* and Sivan's *Paratpara* in *Vachaspati*. The recital ended with an excellent rendition of *Enna Tavam Seidanai*. Nithya's renditions were well-modulated to bring out the bhava of the compositions.

Yogesh Padmanabhan accompanied on the violin and S. Gopakumar played the mridangam. The programme was compered by Ulagamal Pillai.

MUTHU THANDAVAR, ARUNACHALA KAVIRAYAR & OTHER TAMIL COMPOSERS' DAY
20TH AUGUST 2011

Sugandha Atreya sang *Koteeshwara Iyer's Hamsadhwani kriti Varanamukha* and a short *Bhairavi alapana* before Arunachala Kavi's *Yaaro Ivar Yaaro*. A longer *alapana* of *Kalyani* was followed by a good rendition of Muthu Tandavar's *Adinatheppadiyo*. *Muralidhara Gopala* (Mandu), and *Ganamazhai* (ragamalika of Behag, Bowli and Kapi) composed by Ambujam Krishna and a *Tiruppugazh* set to *Jonpuri* ragam brought the recital to a close. The overall listening experience was not unpleasant, if only Sugandha could have brought in more solidity. Pranav Natarajan and Rohit Prasad provided violin and mridangam support respectively.



Roshni Ramesh (Bharatanatyam)

Roshni Ramesh had a live orchestra to accompany her dance recital that contained some interesting items. The vocalist Sujata Nair Sanjay invoked Lord Ganesha with *Ekadantam* before Roshni's entry with the *Kali Kavutvam* composed by Tirunelveli Gangamuthu Annaavi. Arunachala Kavirayar's *Nee Uraippai Hanumaane* set to a ragamalika of *Shree*, *Dhanyasi*, *Kaanada* and *Vasanta* had the raga names incorporated cleverly within the *sahitya*. Did Arunachala Kavirayar have musical expertise too in addition to his poetic skills? Or, judging from a quick glance through the composer's history that reveals that he composed his opera *Rama Natakam* and had it tuned by his students, could this particular piece have been a collaborative effort in order to introduce the raga *mudra* novelty? Maybe experts can throw more light on this. The popular *Poorvikalyani* composition of Neelakantha Sivan *Ananda Natam Aduvar* and Ghanam Krishnaiyar's *padam* focusing on the *vipralabdha nayika Netrandi Nerathile* followed. Despite the lively and varied choreography, the items lacked luster; young Roshni needs to gain more *angashuddha*; some problem areas for instance were ungainly shoulder movements and flaccid *kitathaka tharikita thoms*. The vocalist's Huseni had unnecessary *anuswarams* that

detracted from the raga bhava. The concluding item was a *Hindolam tillana* composed by the Tanjavur quartette. *Nattuvangam* was handled by Guru Jaishree Nair and Sujata Nair Sanjay, Ravi Anantaraman and V.R. Narayanan provided violin and mridangam support respectively.

The programme was anchored by Jyothi Mohan.

S. SESHADRI MEMORIAL TALENT EXPOSURE CONCERT 26TH AUG 2011



Varun S (violin), M.R. Seshan (mridangam)

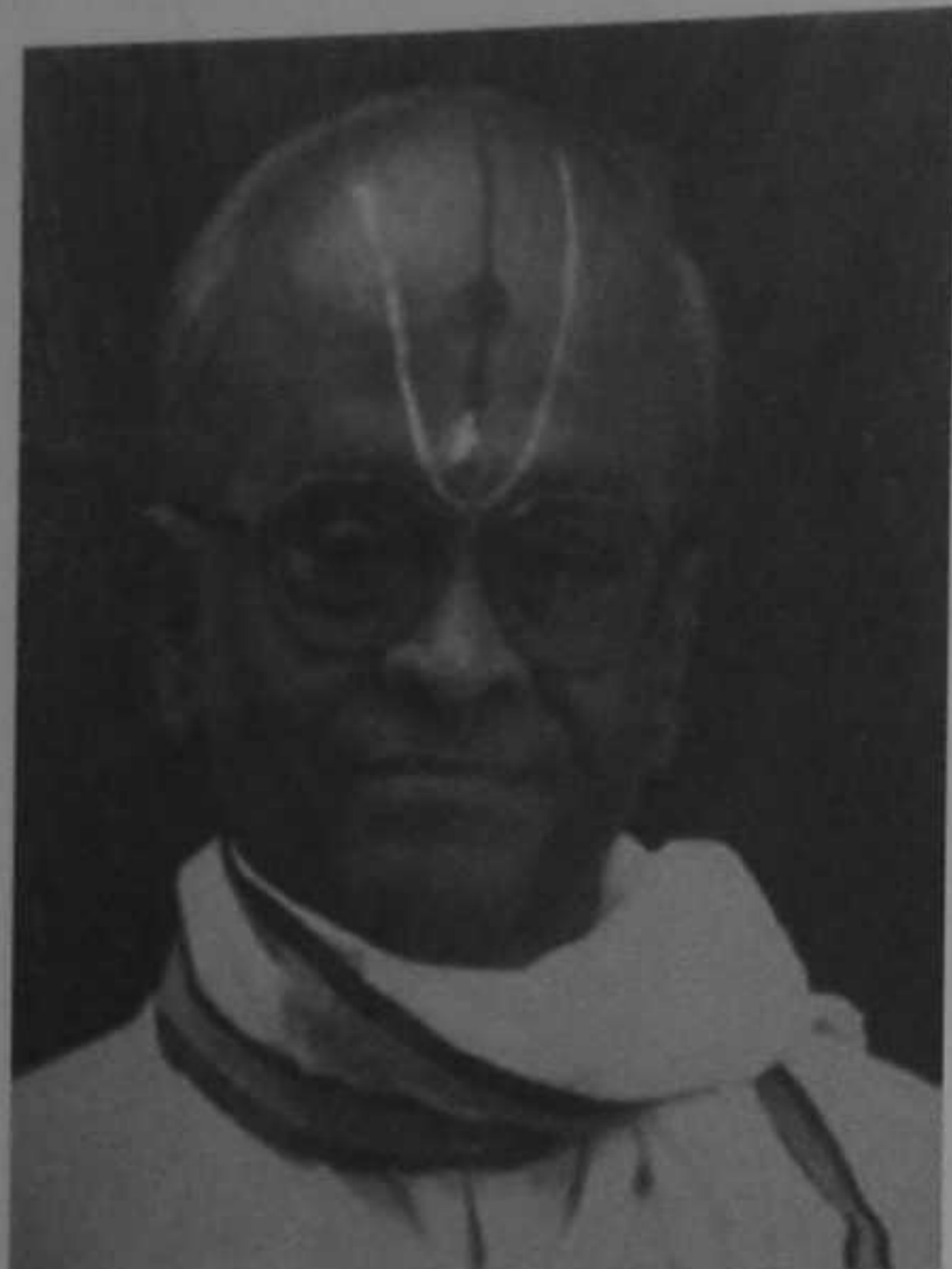
Varun S, a 7th Year student of the Vidyalaya presented a Carnatic violin recital accompanied on the mridangam by 4th year student M. R. Seshan. He played Swati Tirunal's *Shankarabharanam Ata tala varnam* followed by a *Dikshitar kriti* in *Eeshamanohari Shri Gananatham Bhajare*, and two *Thyagaraja kritis* *Telisi Rama* in *Poornachandrika* and *Makelara* in *Ravichandrika*, with *kalpana swaram*. *Kambhoji alapana* preceded *Thyagaraja's Shri Raghuvara* with *Kalpana Swaras* before the concluding *kriti* in *Kuntalavarali Sarasara Samarai*. Varun's violin sound is pleasant. It is commendable that Varun was able to play *kalpana swaras* for even ragas like *Ravichandrika* and *Poornachandrika*. The credit goes in no small measure to his guru *Shri S. R. Ramachandra Sarma*. Varun needs to work hard on speed, fluidity and accuracy from the instrumental angle, and from the musical angle, needs to listen to a lot of good music to build on his raga concepts and improve on his promising *swara gnanam*.



7th year students' Bharatanatyam recital

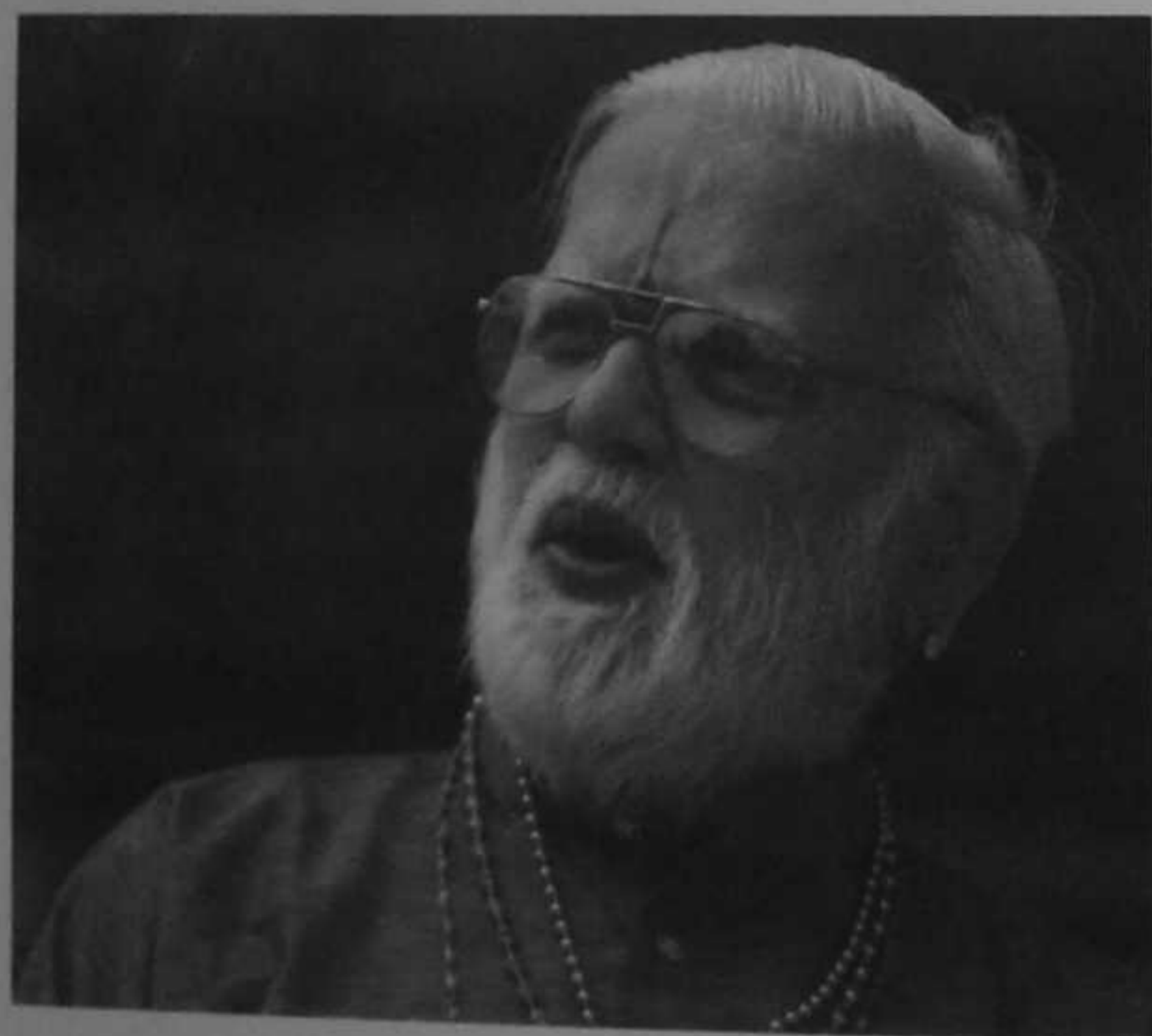
7th year Bharatanatyam students Supriya Kamble, Chaitali Arora, Heramb Ranade, Jahnvi Gurav

and Bhagyalakshmi S presented a recital with most of the traditional margam items, beginning with a Ganesha Kavutvam, alaripu in Adi talam tisra nadai and jatiswaram in Vasanta ragam, proceeding to the popular Muthaiah Bhagavata kriti in Gowda Malhar *Sarasamukhi* before the main item, varnam in Nattakuranji *Swami Naan Undan Adimai*. Araimandi was lacking in some students like Heramb while Bhagyalakshmi showed improvement and Supriya did well. The concluding item was the Dashavatara mangalam of Purandaradasa in Madhyamavati.



OBITUARY

Veteran musician Chingelpet Ranganathan passed away on 12th July 2011. He is survived by his wife, and two sons who are performing flautists. Having undergone rigorous training under the Alathur brothers, Shri Ranganathan was known for his laya expertise and was a musicians' musician. He was Principal of the Teachers' College of Music at the Music Academy. He has composed about 50 tillanas, set to tune about 150 Tiruppugazh hymns and also presented Tiruppugazh as a 72 Melakarta novelty. He was the recipient of a number of awards and titles like the Sangeet Natak Akademi award, Sangeetha Kala Acharya of the Madras Music Academy and Sangeetha Kala Sagaram at the Cleveland Tyagaraja Utsavam.



OBITUARY

Veteran musician and revered guru T.K. Govinda Rao passed away on 18th September 2011 at the age of 82. He received his initial training under Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata and much of his advanced music training under the legendary Musiri Subramania Iyer. He studied at the Central College of Music, Chennai and also served as a lecturer there. His books containing detailed meanings of the lyrics and notations of the compositions of the Trinity, among others, are an invaluable resource for students and

experts alike. He set to tune many compositions, including those of Periyasami Thooran and Purandaradasa. He was a visiting professor at the Annamalai University, Chidambaram, and also worked in All India Radio as chief producer.



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